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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this publication is to focus on issues in development and implementation of comprehensive guidance programs. To achieve this purpose a list of 10 of the most important issues was composed. The top 10 issues, in order of frequency of concern of leaders, are: (1) displacement of non-guidance tasks, including school counselors' appropriate role in standardized testing programs; (2) program accountability; (3) accountability for the quality of school counselor performance; (4) program advocacy; (5) leader empowerment; (6) enhancement of an existing comprehensive guidance program; (7) appropriate use of technology; (8) parent involvement, including responding to parents who are critical of the program; (9) program development process; and (10) enhancement of the cross-cultural competence of school counselors. This book includes monographs from 20 authors who helped identify the top issues in comprehensive guidance programs. In these monographs, the authors share specific examples of how they have responded or are responding to some aspect of a particular issue. The book concludes with a discussion of the catalysts for change identified in the monographs. Then, themes are identified that recur in the achievement of successful results. Lastly, implications are drawn from the leaders' empirical lessons. (Contains 2 appendixes, 3 tables, 8 figures, and 98 references.) (ADT)

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Critical Leadership Issues and Successful Responses

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Edited by
Norman Gysbers and
Patricia Henderson

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ERIC Clearinghouse on Counseling and Student Services

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Implementing Comprehensive School Guidance Programs: *Critical Leadership Issues and Successful Responses*

Edited by
Patricia Henderson
and
Norman Gysbers

with contributions from
School Guidance Program Leaders

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Preface

The pursuit of excellence in Comprehensive School Guidance Programs is a challenging and never-ending process. What works at one time frequently is inadequate or incomplete at a later time. This, the third in a series of ERIC/CASS publications on comprehensive school guidance programs (CSGP) seeks to make available to managers and participating counselors the ideas and resources from leaders in CSGP. Its primary focus is *implementation* and putting into use what experience has shown to be effective.

The basic framework for this publication are the "top ten" issues of importance as identified in a survey of leaders of CSGPs. Henderson and Gysbers also obtained ideas from the same leaders as well as others and a perusal of the expanding literature on CSGPs as how to respond to those issues. This approach of identifying both the issues and suggested responses to the issues is what we at ERIC/CASS are constantly called upon to provide. "Help us to know what are the important problems and issues and what are some effective responses" is an ongoing comment we receive. This monograph, we believe, focuses precisely on what a wide variety of persons need and want. And ask for!

It is appropriate to say that this monograph is an important contribution to the CSGP literature. It offers the best of what is known regarding what a CSGP should be and how it should be implemented. Future work will require that the responses which have been suggested for user refinement and customization be subjected to rigorous research and validation. But, it is important to note that before we can undertake relevant research, we need to know what experience has identified as "the way to go" so we can undertake evaluation research to provide empirical evidence as to "what works or doesn't work". This research will determine where we should direct our continuing efforts for improvement.

An important source for all persons associated with CSGPs is the ERIC/CASS website (http://ericcass.uncg.edu). This website contains not only a special site containing information specifically focused on CSGPs, but the ERIC/CASS Gateway websites as well (displayed on the back cover). We suggest you use these websites as a continuing source of new ideas and resources. Additionally, it provides a readily available means for your sharing ideas/resources which you have developed and work for you! As always, if you have questions or ideas we welcome them!

Garry R. Walz, Ph.D., NCC
Co-Director
ERIC/CASS

Implementing Comprehensive School Guidance Programs: *Critical Leadership Issues and Successful Responses*

Edited by
Patricia Henderson
and
Norman Gysbers

with contributions from
School Guidance Program Leaders

Overview

The Comprehensive Guidance Program, the Issues, and the Authors

Certain issues have recurred throughout more than 20 years of developing and implementing comprehensive guidance programs in a variety of settings (i.e., regions of the country, size of the school or school system, varying administrative structures—from those that are nearly fully managed at the building level to those that are centrally managed). This publication presents an anthology of differing experiences in responding to some of these recurrent issues during the five phases of the program development process.

The Comprehensive Guidance Program Model

Essentially, school-based comprehensive guidance programs are those that have tailored or are tailoring each of the program elements to their local setting by going through the recommended program development process. These elements detail the program's content, organizational framework and design, and supporting resources. These elements are briefly summarized here. For a more complete description of each, please refer to *Developing and Managing Your School Guidance Program* (Gysbers & Henderson, 2000), the basic text that describes the comprehensive guidance program model.

Content: A comprehensive guidance program has identified the content that students learn or apply as a result of participating in program activities. The content is outlined according to subject area domains and specifies competencies students are expected to demonstrate at each grade level or span of grades. Examples of domains are those represented in the ASCA national standards: educational development, career development, and personal and social development (Campbell & Dahir, 1997).

Organizational framework: A school or district with a comprehensive guidance program has adopted an organizational framework, adapted the program design to fit the school or school district's priorities, and matched

these to the resources available to the program. The organizational framework includes structural and program components. There are qualitative and quantitative facets of the program design.

Structural components: There are three structural components: (a) the *rationale* supporting the program, the needs for the program, and the results sought within it; (b) the *assumptions* on which the program is based, including those about the program itself, its clients, and its staff; and (c) the program *definition*, its purpose and mission.

Program components: The program components describe the delivery system; that is, the sets of activities through which the program is implemented. A hallmark of comprehensive guidance programs is that the guidance curriculum is delivered through activities that assist students with their *individual planning; responsive services* offered to students, their teachers, and their parents as students face barriers to their success in school; and through activities that provide or engender *system support* for the program and for relevant schoolwide efforts.

Program design: The qualitative program design establishes specific expectations for the best use of school counselors' talents: the *priorities* for content results, for clients to be served, and for the activities to be offered. The quantitative design expresses the *parameters* for the use of program resources, such as school counselors' time (the primary resource in a guidance program), the ratio of counselors to students, and budget appropriations.

Material resources: Material resources encompass human, political, budgetary, and other assets needed for and consumed in the program. Comprehensive guidance program developers and managers ensure that sufficient resources are appropriated to implement the program design effectively. Comprehensive guidance program leaders and managers ensure that accountable use is made of the Resources that support the program.

The Program Development and Implementation Process

Issues in implementation of comprehensive guidance programs must be viewed in the context of the five phases of program development: planning, designing, implementing, evaluating, and enhancing. Again, this publication offers a brief synopsis of a complicated process. The program development phases are detailed in *Developing and Managing Your School Guidance Program* (Gysbers & Henderson, 2000). A collection of successful initial program development experiences are

published in *Comprehensive Guidance Programs That Work—II* (Gysbers & Henderson, 1997).

Planning and designing: Planning and designing are done periodically to lay out the foundation of the program. Planning entails considering the roots of the guidance program, both professional and local, and adopting or readopting the guidance program model to be followed. During this phase, what the current program does and the resources used in it are assessed. Designing entails making decisions as to the program priorities and how the program resources ought to be allocated. It concludes with a written description of the program's organizational framework and design, and a plan for making the improvements required to bring the current program into alignment with the adopted model.

Implementing: Implementation, the accomplishment of program activities, is ongoing. Guidance curriculum and individual planning comprise the developmental guidance portions of the program. Guidance curriculum activities encompass classroom guidance lessons and other instructional activities. Individual planning activities systematically help all students develop and implement plans for attaining their school, career, personal, and social goals. Such activities include providing academic and career advisement, helping students understand and use information from their assessment results, and assisting them to effectively manage transitions from one school level to the next. Responsive services comprise the preventive and remedial portions of the program. These include proactive and planned individual, small-group, and crisis counseling, as well as systematic methods of consulting with teachers, administrators, and parents regarding students' barriers to their learning or other student needs identified through guidance and counseling activities. System support activities sustain systematic and continuous improvement of the comprehensive guidance program, continuous professional development of the school counselors and other staff members, and inclusion of the guidance program and staff members in school-community efforts.

Evaluating: Evaluating a comprehensive guidance program entails regularly and objectively judging the effectiveness and efficiency of the program and its personnel. Program effectiveness is measured in terms of the results demonstrated by students during and after program participation. Efficiency is measured in terms of the alignment between the program design and actual program implementation. Personnel evaluation is conducted through a professionally appropriate system of supervision and evaluation, the purpose of which is to enhance the quality of program staff members' performance—particularly that of the school counselors.

Enhancing: Enhancing a comprehensive guidance program entails conducting activities similar to those done during the planning phase. Recommendations for enhancement are made based on the results of evaluation; on new developments in the profession, the field of guidance, or the local community; or on updated assessments of students' needs. New priorities are established, as are new parameters for resource allocation. Plans for making the targeted program improvements are developed and implemented.

Definition of Leadership in Comprehensive Guidance Programs

Guidance program and staff leaders are those charged with the responsibility for implementing the guidance program. They carry a range of titles, such as director, coordinator, or specialist (Henderson & Gysbers, 1998). Through time and experience with comprehensive guidance programs, much has been learned about the importance of effective leadership to the quality of the program (Gysbers & Henderson, 2000) and to the quality of the performance of the guidance program staff (Henderson & Gysbers, 1998). Leadership is particularly important in responding to critical issues when they arise.

In responding effectively to issues that reveal a need for program improvement or present challenges to the program, guidance program staff leaders fulfill administrative, supervisory, managerial, and professional leadership roles. *Administrative* activities are those that rest on legitimate authority delegated to the guidance program leaders by the school board. They include establishing systems for program and performance accountability and evaluation. *Supervisory* activities rest on the leaders' experience-based professional expertise. Activities of this type include professionally appropriate clinical, developmental, and job assignment–related administrative activities aimed at helping staff members enhance their competence and commitment to their jobs. *Managerial* activities rely on leaders having personal, human, financial, material, and political resources to share with their staff members. Among these activities are resource acquisition (such as budget, equipment, and facilities appropriations), management (such as monitoring the efficiency of all resource use, including school counselor time), and linking with providers and managers of resources throughout the school or district. *Professional leadership* rests on the leaders' commitment to the counseling profession. The activities they conduct in fulfilling this role include providing models of

professionalism for their staff members, and basing their thoughts and deeds on the standards of the counseling and education professions (Henderson & Gysbers, 1998).

Critical Issues and Their Selection

An issue is a problem with at least two potential resolutions. In the context of guidance program development and implementation, a *critical issue* is a problem that potentially may have serious impact on the implementation of the program development process, on the effectiveness of comprehensive guidance program implementation, or on the personnel affected by program change. When they arise, critical issues either provide opportunities for program enhancement or threaten the integrity of the program.

Specific Issues Addressed in This Publication

With that definition in mind, the list of issues that guidance program leaders face in rising to the challenges inherent in restructuring guidance programs to be more comprehensive is probably endless. Issues arise in adapting the comprehensive guidance program model; in working through the program development process; and in providing effective leadership to the program, process, and staff members.

Issues that arise in adapting the comprehensive guidance program model include coming to consensus about the content of the program and the rationale for, assumptions behind, and mission statement of the program. Common understanding regarding each of the program components must be attained. All staff members—and, ideally, the program users—should be clear on the kinds of activities that make up the guidance curriculum, the individual planning system, the responsive services, and legitimate system support. The human, material, and political resources available to and needed in program implementation must be specified.

Issues arise in working through each phase of the program development process: appreciating the program roots, getting organized to restructure the program, planning, designing, making the transition to and implementing a new program design, evaluating the new program design, and continuously enhancing the program. Issues that arise in providing effective leadership to the program, the process, and the staff begin with designation of the primary guidance program and staff leader(s), and clarification of the roles of the variety of leaders who participate or are invested in the comprehensive guidance

program. Primary guidance program leaders include district- and building-level leaders. Other guidance-relevant leaders include administrators, counselors, teachers, parents, and students. Steering committee members have responsibilities in developing guidance program leadership, advisory committee members have other leadership responsibilities (Gysbers & Henderson, 2000), and so on. School counselors and other program staff members have leadership responsibilities for various parts of the program or the process (Gysbers & Henderson, 2000). Each set of leaders must have the competencies necessary to carry out their roles, raising another whole set of potential issues.

The purpose of this publication is not to address all of the issues that may possibly arise, but rather to focus on issues in development and implementation. Its purpose is to provide some specific examples of recurrent issues and to exemplify effective leadership in responding to these issues. To achieve our purpose, we identified an initial list of issue topics from our observations in schools and districts across the nation and in other countries. An initial survey regarding these identified issues was sent to individuals known to us as model leaders and practitioners in districts with successful and relatively long-term implementation of comprehensive guidance programs. The purpose of the survey was to verify our observations as to the recurrent nature of each issue and to elicit respondents' perceptions regarding the importance of responding appropriately to it.

The issues then were prioritized in light of their perceived frequency and importance. The "top ten" that were identified are listed here in the order of frequency of concern of leaders:

1. Displacement of non-guidance tasks, including school counselors' appropriate role in standardized testing programs
2. Program accountability
3. Accountability for the quality of school counselor performance
4. Program advocacy
5. Leader empowerment
6. Enhancement of an existing comprehensive guidance program
7. Appropriate use of technology
8. Parent involvement, including responding to parents who are critical of the program
9. Program development process
10. Enhancement of the cross-cultural competence of school counselors

This publication is divided into 10 sections, each section addressing one of these issues. The introduction to each section describes specific areas that fall under that general issue and provides examples. We define the issue, as it was identified in the survey. We also offer an idea of the range or scope of problems within each issue, as well as an example of why or how the issue is

critical. It is clear to us from the survey responses and from our experiences that managing these issues is critical. In other words, when any of these issues is faced and addressed well, the guidance program is strengthened. When one of these issues arises and is either ignored or addressed unsuccessfully, the program is weakened.

Leadership in Responding to Critical Issues

Issues do not arise in categories, they arise in specific situations and circumstances, i.e., specific events in a specific context with specific individuals. Leaders are challenged to recognize critical issues when they surface, to learn about them, and to strive to manage such situations in order to capitalize on the opportunities and minimize the damage to the program. In addressing critical issues, leaders must accept their designated responsibilities; use their administrative, supervisory, managerial, and professional leadership roles appropriately; and, to the best of their capacity, influence program decision makers, implementers, and consumers to move in program-enhancing directions. Each situation is a learning experience for the program leaders and providers. Specific empirical lessons inform others' responses to the same issue. We learn from each other's experiences.

How Authors Were Identified

With more than 30 states (Sink & MacDonald, 1998) and many, many school districts and schools having adopted or adapted the comprehensive guidance program model, there are many effective guidance program and staff leaders available to share their experiences. The authors included in this publication were selected from among survey recipients who described experiences with the particular issues we had prioritized.

The survey respondents were invited to share specific examples of how they have responded or are responding to some aspect of a particular issue. They were invited to describe their experiences by responding to five questions:

1. What was the catalyst that caused you to address the topic? What started the situation?
2. What did you do that was successful? What did you learn in managing the situation?
3. What did you do that did not work? What did you learn from that experience?

4. Whom did you involve in addressing the issue?
5. What advice would you give to someone who is addressing the same issue?

We find these descriptions to be illustrative not only of what these critical issues look like when they arise, but also of exemplary leadership responses to the situations.

Format of This Publication

Implementing Comprehensive Guidance Programs contains the compilation of examples of these individuals' actual situations and leadership responses. In each of the following sections, a brief description of the issue is provided, followed by two example experiences with that issue. In most of these narratives, the leaders own up to taking both steps and missteps as the particular issue surfaced. In most instances, the results of addressing the issue were program enhancing. In the conclusion, we draw some implications and judgments from considering the entire collection of experiences. From studying similarities that cut across the experiences, we identify some imperatives that we recommend others follow when issues arise in comprehensive guidance program implementation.

The order of the presentation of these examples corresponds to their place in the sequence of phases of the program development process. From their experiences in the *planning and designing phase,* Miles and Taylor describe examples of helping school districts get started in the process.

Several sets of experiences from the *implementation phase* are offered. Larivee and Krueger describe examples of empowering themselves and others as guidance program and staff leaders. Madden and Petersen relate their experiences with displacing non-guidance tasks in making the transition to a comprehensive guidance program. Cuthbert and Price talk about how they have involved and responded to parents in their programs. Lopez and Trotter describe their advocacy experiences. Bowers and Evans and Ward provide ways they effectively use technology as a resource in their guidance programs.

Experiences that arose during the *evaluation phase* of program development are shared by Maliszewski and Mackiel and by Woodard and Malone. These authors write about establishing systems to better ensure program accountability. Kosteck Bunch and Synatschk describe implementing systems to better ensure high quality performance by school counselors.

Two sets of examples of responding to issues that often arise during the

enhancement phase of program development are provided. Davis and Fuston and Hargens describe methods used in their respective school districts to enhance their existing programs. Locke and Zambrano outline methods they have used to enhance the cultural competence of program staff members (counselors, teachers, and administrators).

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Part 1

Critical Issues in Program Development

Tailoring the Comprehensive Guidance Program Model to Fit Richland County School District One: *Building the Foundation*

Ronald D. Miles
Richland County School District One
Columbia, South Carolina

Evaluation of Counseling Services in a Rural School District: *Assessing Current Program Status*

Elizabeth R. Taylor
Texas Christian University
Fort Worth, Texas

Program Development

The program development process for restructuring a guidance program entails the five phases described in the introduction (getting organized, planning, designing, implementing, evaluating, and enhancing.) The process requires time, energy, and thought from a variety of professionals and laypeople, as well as leadership from the guidance program staff—including the designated leader and the professional school counselors.

When the full process is pursued, the resulting program is tailored to meet the needs and wants of the students and the school community. Its structure is solid. It has been designed to make optimal use of the resources available and includes a plan for enhanced resource allocation. The program is delivered according to the design. The results can be gathered and interpreted; the staff can be held accountable. When the process is short-circuited or aborted, the odds are that full, effective, and efficient implementation will not occur. An underdeveloped or incomplete program is not stable; its integrity is vulnerable to external pressures.

Chapter One

Tailoring the Comprehensive Guidance Program Model to Fit Richland County School District One: *Building the Foundation*

Ronald D. Miles
Richland County School District One,
Columbia, South Carolina

Richland County School District One is a richly diverse school district. Encompassing most of the land area of the county, it is the third largest school district in South Carolina. With more than 27,000 students and more than 4,000 employees, the district serves the urban population of the state's capital city, Columbia, as well as surrounding suburban and rural areas.

In selecting a program model, the district personnel were aware that whatever model they selected had to be flexible and adaptable in order to address the multitude of community needs. These needs included a comprehensive student-centered program; a curriculum that was developmental rather than reactive in scope; and a systemic approach to student personal, social, educational, and career development. In addition, the model had to support the goals of the district's five-year strategic plan, which called for realistic goal setting for students, an increase in parent involvement, an increase in the graduation rate, and a decrease in the unemployment rate of high school graduates.

After careful review and consideration, the district adopted the model described by Gysbers and Henderson (2000) as its model for program restructuring. The two major attractions of this model can be identified simply by the terms *comprehensive* and *developmental.* The district needed a program model that was more than a listing of services. It needed a guidance program that was an integral component of each student's educational process. In addition, the district wanted a program that would assist all students to acquire age-appropriate competencies related to career, educational, personal, and social pursuits.

The Development, Adoption, and Implementation of the Model

The process of developing, adopting, and implementing a comprehensive and developmental guidance program is a demanding, ongoing, and rewarding experience. As one layer of need is identified and addressed, another layer is exposed. For example, as program modules and curriculum frameworks were developed, the need for additional staff training became apparent. School districts beginning this process need to be aware that the work of restructuring is inevitably a three- to five-year process. In many cases the first year is consumed with current program assessment and the development of a new written program. Years two and three become training, implementation, and evaluation years. Although some personnel may become frustrated when major changes are not apparent in the short term, they need to remember that just as their current program did not reach its present state in a year, it will not be changed in one year either. Commitment, hard work, clear communication, and support are critical factors during the process of program restructuring.

It was apparent that the district needed to make a significant change in the direction of its guidance and counseling program. With this goal in mind, the following chart was developed as a framework for organizational change (see Table 1).

Table 1. School Counseling: A New Direction

FROM:	TO:
Position	Program
Ancillary services	Planned components
Remedial only	Developmental and preventive
Reactive	Proactive
Administrative or clinical	Educational
Some students served	All students served
Office services	Direct services (students, parents, and colleagues)

District personnel recognized that once a model and philosophy were adopted, certain staff and program assumptions had to be identified as cornerstones of the comprehensive developmental guidance and counseling program. Again, borrowing from the work of Gysbers and Henderson (2000), the following assumptions were written. Combined with the district's philosophy, these assumptions serve as an introduction to the district's completed program.

Developmental Guidance and Counseling Program Assumptions

For effective implementation of the Richland County School District One Developmental Guidance and Counseling Program to occur, certain staff and program conditions must exist. The developmental guidance and counseling program is based on the following assumptions.

Staff Assumptions

- School counselors shall be fully certified by the South Carolina State Department of Education and shall have the requisite training to fulfill their responsibilities and specialized job assignments.
- School counselors shall maintain and operate within the guidelines of the ethical standards prescribed by the American School Counselor Association.
- The counselor will completely and professionally carry out the following five basic roles (these roles are defined further in the program components): (Gysbers & Henderson, 1997)
    1. Program management
    2. Guidance
    3. Counseling
    4. Consultation
    5. Coordination
- The counselor is an integral part of the school community team, which includes teachers, administrators, specialists, parents, health professionals, and other community representatives.
- Conditions for effective program implementation will include administrative commitment to and support of the guidance program, favorable interpersonal relations among the school staff, adequate physical resources, adequate time for the delivery of services, and an adequate budget.
- The counselor-to-student ratio shall be appropriate to implement the comprehensive guidance program as designed in this framework.

Program Assumptions

The guidance program:

- serves equally all students, parents, teachers, and other recipients regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, cultural background, sexual orientation, disability, socioeconomic status, learning ability level, or language;
- guarantees the student access to the counselor and the counselor access to the student;

- helps develop and protect students' individuality;
- helps students function effectively with others in the school, home, and community;
- helps all students develop competencies at all educational levels;
- assists students in their personal, social, career, and educational development;
- provides consultation and coordination services to the teachers, parents, administrators, and others who work with students;
- provides developmental as well as preventive and remedial services;
- is both an integral part of and an independent component of the total education program;
- is continuously refined through systematic planning, designing, implementing, and evaluating.

Ongoing Professional Development

In the area of professional development, the district became aware that its guidance staff had diverse training backgrounds. School counselors were at many different levels of counseling skills and program management techniques, ranging from minimum coursework for certification to advanced degrees in counseling. Beginning in the 1993–94 school year, the district initiated a detailed program of staff development designed to address the professional needs of its school counselors. Topics for professional development included cross-cultural counseling, strategies for parent involvement, small-group counseling, public relations, and skills in consultation. Based on yearly needs assessments, the district now contracts with consultants across the country to provide state-of-the-art staff development sessions for its counselors. These sessions are held monthly and provide counselors with current and practical strategies related to the requirements of their programs.

Program Review and Refinement

A major and ongoing initiative for the Richland One (or any districtwide) guidance program is the review and updating of all program components. Standards, competencies, and strategies need to be carefully reviewed on a regular basis to ensure program proficiency and accountability. In Richland One, the written program is reviewed every three years. Since its formal adoption in 1994, the program has experienced two revision cycles. These efforts have assured program alignment with the national

school counseling standards of the American School Counselor Association (1997) and the foundation and competency domains of the SCANS Report (U.S. Department of Labor, 1991). In addition, the competencies from the state program model and the district character education program have been infused into the guidance and counseling program.

Advice for Other Districts

Recommendations for other school districts contemplating program restructuring are encapsulated in six simple principles:

1. Receive and nurture district-level support. The superintendent, program directors, and school board members are key players who need to be involved from the beginning. The understanding and support of top-level leaders sets a tone that is adopted by other district employees, parents, and community leaders. When significant district personnel view the program as important, additional support is much easier to achieve.
2. Involve counselors, teachers, principals, parents, students, and community members in the development of the program. Remember, the more people who assist with this process, the greater the advocate and support base will become. These individuals are strong allies who need to be recruited for advisory and steering committees, and included in program assessment and development.
3. Public relations and accountability are critical in gathering and maintaining support. They are valuable resources in ensuring that the guidance program provides necessary and important services for all students. The use of workshops, in-service presentations, brochures, and public service announcements can assist with this effort. Remember, each day that people don't work for their program, they may be working against it.
4. There is no need to reinvent the wheel. Contacting other school districts and specialists in the field of school counseling can prove very useful. We can all learn from each other's success and mistakes. It is wise to visit other successful school districts and perhaps even develop a mentoring relationship with one nearby. In addition, professional conferences and school counseling–related literature are filled with helpful and practical strategies and techniques.
5. Take your time. Remember that Rome was not built in a day. Expect resistance. Change is not easy for many people. It is better to spend several years developing a quality program than to spend just a few

months developing a program that works only on paper. Be patient, as people and institutions need time to adapt to change. Often the mere mention of change creates apprehension in others. As more people witness the benefits of a successful school counseling program, you will secure more advocates.

6. Continue to hope. Life without hope is meaningless. Hope for our students is critical. So is hope for quality school guidance programs. Remember the words of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., "Keep your eyes on the prize and carry forth."

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About the Author

Ronald D. Miles, Ph.D., is an educational consultant working with U.S. and Canadian school systems in their efforts to improve student services. Additionally, he is an adjunct professor for several universities in South Carolina. He retired in 2001 as coordinator for guidance and counseling services for Richland County School District One in Columbia, South Carolina, a position he had held for nine years. Previously, he served for 20 years as a school counselor and classroom teacher. He has been recognized by the American School Counselor Association as Guidance Administrator of the Year. He can be reached at dr-ron@sc.rr.com or at 3503 Yale Avenue, Columbia, SC 29205-2759.

Chapter Two

Evaluation of Counseling Services in a Rural School District: *Assessing Current Program Status*

Elizabeth R. Taylor
Texas Christian University, Forth Worth, Texas

Historically, counseling services have been considered ancillary to school functioning. This attitude was reinforced by the pseudo-clerical activities performed by many counselors and resulted in counselors being assigned various non-guidance duties, given that they had no clear focus, had a flexible schedule, and were already involved in other ancillary tasks (Gysbers & Henderson, 2000). However, as a result of Gysbers' and Moore's (1974) landmark work, ancillary programs across the nation began being transformed into organized and comprehensive programs. In Texas, a grant through the Office of Education in 1971 acted as a catalyst for 66 districts to transform their counseling services into developmental guidance programs. This grant also led to the development of *The Comprehensive Guidance Program for Texas Public Schools: A Guide for Program Development: Pre-K–12th Grade* (Texas Education Agency, 1998). This publication, henceforth referred to as the Guide, is based on the comprehensive guidance program model. Although not all Texas schools received grant funding, the state education agency advocated the transformation of all counseling services into developmental guidance programs. To begin, it was necessary to evaluate current services of school districts and then compare them to the developmental guidance model (Gysbers & Henderson, 1997). The following describes the process undertaken and lessons learned when evaluating a relatively small rural school district located in north Texas, in order to begin this model transformation.

Evaluation

Purpose: It was the purpose of this study to evaluate the counseling services, as they existed pre-transformation, through the eyes of school administrators,

students, teachers, counselors, and parents. Qualitative and quantitative approaches were employed to examine the state of and satisfaction with counseling services. Specifically, the following questions were addressed:

1. What are the counselors' roles in the schools?
2. How is the individual counselor's time being divided between the four developmental guidance components—group guidance, responsive services, individual planning, and system support—and how does this allocation compare with the recommendations in the Guide?
3. How do counselors, administrators, teachers, parents, and students perceive counseling services and their effectiveness with students?

Setting: The evaluation occurred in a school district in a small rural town with approximately 25,000 citizens. The overwhelming majority of the population is White (98.6%) with an average household income of approximately $50,000. The school district has nine schools—one high school, one middle school (seventh and eighth grades), one intermediate school (fifth and sixth grades), an alternative school, and five elementary schools. Individuals throughout the district were invited to participate in the study, including the 14 counselors, 329 teachers, 14 school administrators, and 3,400 students and their parents.

Method

An initial meeting was convened with the assistant superintendent, who was also the counselors' supervisor. A second meeting was then conducted with all school counselors in the district to apprise them of the processes necessary for a successful evaluation. During this meeting, one counselor stepped forward and indicated she would be interested in assisting with the evaluation. This counselor played a major role throughout the evaluation process in assembling the counselors and disseminating information as well as apprising the evaluator of the historical aspects of the counseling services.

Instrumentation

In order to determine the community's needs for and satisfaction with counseling services, five different surveys in the form of rating scales were administered, one to each of five groups—parents, elementary students, secondary students, teachers, counselors, and administrators. All surveys were based on those provided by Rye and Sparks (1998) and Fairchild (1994), and were modified through consultation with school counselors. (Copies of the surveys may be obtained by contacting the author.)

Parents and students were matched, so that for those students who received

a survey, their parents also received one. The surveys were mailed to parents with a letter explaining confidentiality, purpose, and procedures. The letter asked parents to complete their survey and to help their children complete theirs. This avoided the cumbersome task of obtaining permission forms from each parent to allow the child to participate in the study.

Parent and student surveys: The parent survey contained eight questions regarding service availability, accessibility, and information dissemination. For each question the parent selected from *yes, no, I don't know,* or *not applicable* responses. The elementary (19 questions) and secondary (12 questions) student surveys addressed counselor availability, relationship skills, and guidance activities using *yes, no,* and *not sure* response categories.

The evaluator resolved to sample 100 students and their parents from each of grades one through eight; the high school administrators volunteered to mail surveys to all the high school students and their parents as part of their monthly newsletter. Classrooms were selected at the elementary, intermediate, and middle school through cluster sampling. Twenty students from each grade level were then randomly selected from the targeted classrooms to receive the parent and student surveys. In total, 1,600 students and parents from the first through eighth grades, and 1,800 high school students and their parents, received surveys.

Of the 500 elementary-level surveys, 314 (63%) of the student surveys and 315 (63%) of the parent surveys were completed and returned. Of the 400 surveys distributed at the intermediate and middle schools, 89 (22%) of the student surveys and 85 (21%) of the parent surveys were completed and returned. Even more disappointing was the response rate to the 1,800 surveys sent to parents and their children at the high school. Only 13 (0.72%) parents and 46 students (2%) completed and returned their surveys.

Teacher survey: The teacher survey was a 13-question, 5-point Likert scale with three open-ended questions regarding the teacher's satisfaction with the counseling program in his or her respective school. The survey was distributed to the 329 teachers in the nine schools to be completed and returned anonymously. Of those distributed, 183 (56%) were completed and returned.

Administrator survey: The administrator survey was a 20-question, 5-point Likert scale with three open-ended questions addressing the counselor's effectiveness with parents, administrators, teachers, and students. All 14 administrators (100%) from the nine schools completed the scale and returned it anonymously to the evaluator in a self-addressed stamped envelope.

Counselor survey: The counselor survey was a 13-question, 5-point Likert scale with three open-ended questions asking the counselors to assess their own skills in working with students, teachers, parents, and administrators. All 14 counselor surveys (100%) were returned anonymously to the evaluator in a

self-addressed stamped envelope.

Interviews: The counselors were also interviewed one-on-one in a semi-structured interview to assess their perceptions about the strengths and needs of the counseling services and the roles they played in their respective schools.

Time logs: In order to examine how much time each counselor spent performing each of the four program components outlined in the Texas model (group guidance, responsive services, individual planning, and support services), the evaluator utilized a form similar to the one Henderson used in her evaluation of the Northside ISD program in San Antonio (Gysbers & Henderson, 2000). Counselors kept the log for a total of four weeks, two weeks in the fall and two weeks in the spring.

Communication of Findings

Fostering participation is an essential part of evaluation and politics in evaluation studies (Worthen, Sanders, & Fitzpatrick, 1997). To accomplish this, the evaluator met with the counselors monthly to provide them with findings to date and obtain their feedback about data validity and reliability. The evaluator also met with the counselors' supervisor (the assistant superintendent) twice during the evaluation to keep her informed of process and procedures. The final written report was provided to all campus administrators, the assistant superintendent, the counselors, and the superintendent of schools. A slide presentation regarding model developmental guidance programs and how the evaluation findings for the district compared to this model was delivered at one of the weekly meetings of central and campus administrators.

Conclusions

This evaluation accomplished several tasks necessary for comparing current services with those specified in the Guide. First, counselors were able to document the amount of time they spent in guidance and non-guidance tasks and compare this with the state model. Second, school administrators and counselors obtained critical information regarding how others perceived guidance services and how they might be improved. Finally, administrators received information about state-of-the-art developmental guidance programs as outlined by the Guide and Gysbers and Henderson (1997). Until this time, the counselors' supervisor had been unaware of the developmental guidance model.

The evaluation has resulted in some changes at the district level. First, assistant principals were employed to work at each elementary school, thus relieving counselors of some administrative tasks. Second, the counselors'

supervisor appointed two lead counselors, one for elementary and one for secondary, to coordinate meetings of counselors and disseminate information. Communication was a strong concern of counselors, so they supported this change as a major step in addressing their concern. To address the same issue, the counselors' supervisor began convening quarterly meetings to discuss pertinent issues in program development and processes. Finally, as a result of these events, the school counselors were able to develop a mission and goals statement for their new counseling program and currently are working on the curriculum.

Several important events, planned and unplanned, allowed this evaluation to accomplish these tasks.

1. By meeting with the assistant superintendent beforehand and gaining her support, the evaluator elicited the full cooperation of principals, who encouraged their teachers to cooperate in gathering information. Building principals also allowed their counselors time to meet with the evaluator on a regular basis. This meeting time was important, because the success of the evaluation ultimately depended on the support of the counselors.
2. A review of the literature yielded a vast amount of information about surveys and questionnaires that had been used in previous counseling program evaluations. The selection of surveys afforded a base from which to work and refine questions for this specific district.
3. The ready assistance and support of one of the key school counselors in this district also contributed to the success of the evaluation. This counselor encouraged others to support the evaluation efforts and provided qualitative information regarding the history and current processes of the counseling program.
4. Ongoing communication with counselors was also critical. Not only were meetings convened once a month, but counselors and the evaluator also exchanged electronic mail (e-mail) addresses, which created a reciprocal flow of conversation and information exchange between monthly meetings. E-mail also allowed the evaluator quickly to clarify unclear information provided on surveys or in interviews. Probably the most important function of e-mail communication was to arrange meetings, survey distributions and pickups, and overall management of the evaluation processes.

Although this evaluation appears to have accomplished its initial goals, the following lessons were learned that might improve such an evaluation in the future:

1. **Secure a commitment from the administrators to use the results for change.** Because it was the evaluator, not district administrators,

who instigated the evaluation, the central office administrators were not committed to making changes to improve the counseling services. They embraced the idea of an evaluation, but most likely did so in order to fulfill requirements from the state monitoring agencies. Because of their lack of commitment to change, it was difficult to involve administrators in the evaluation, even though it would have been desirable to have had ongoing meetings to discuss goals, objectives, processes, and progress of the evaluation (Worthen, Sanders, & Fitzpatrick, 1997, p. 199). The superintendent did not attend meetings regarding the evaluation, nor did he ever discuss any aspect of the evaluation with the evaluator. Therefore, it was not surprising that central administration did not take action on the evaluation results until the end of the following year.

2. **Enlist the support of the school board before beginning the evaluation.** Resources are limited in small, rural districts. Funding issues became particularly problematic when trying to relieve counselors of some of their administrative duties by hiring assistant principals. In this small district, the top three administrators in the central office managed all programs, including counseling, special education, gifted and talented, migrant, and Section 504. Their lack of commitment to change resulted in part from a lack of time and resources to obtain the necessary personnel and supplies. By enlisting school board members' support for restructuring the counseling program before beginning the evaluation, administrators would have been able to reprioritize their time and funding expenditures.
3. **Inform parents about the evaluation directly.** The poor return rate of surveys from the intermediate, middle, and high school students and parents was clearly not acceptable. More surveys were distributed at the high school than at all other schools together, but the fewest were returned from that school. Perhaps most parents did not read the monthly newsletter, or perhaps there was so much information in that particular newsletter that the surveys were not noticed. Another reason for the poor return rate may have been a lack of interest in, or information about, the counseling services at the high school. In order to maximize response rates, it might be important to contact parents directly, either face-to-face or by telephone, and educate them about the purposes of the evaluation. Another approach might be to distribute the surveys at school gatherings where parents are in attendance. The evaluator could also obtain the parents' permission to survey their children about the counseling services, thus allowing student surveys to be conducted at school.

Overall, the evaluation provided important information to the administration in this small rural district, but changes are likely to be slow due to the administrators' lack of funding, time, and commitment. The counselors, however, now have input from a variety of individuals about the services they provide and how they might be improved. Administrators are now aware of the developmental guidance model and how the counseling services in the school district compare to those recommended by the state education agency. The evaluation acted as a catalyst in transforming the traditional counseling services in this district into a developmental guidance model program.

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About the Author

Elizabeth R. Taylor is assistant professor and director of the Counseling Program in the School of Education at Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, Texas. Prior to taking her current position, she was assistant professor at the University of Texas Health Sciences Center in San Antonio, Texas. Her previous experience includes serving for ten years as a counselor-educator, teaching emotionally disturbed children, and working as an educational diagnostician. She has published articles and given presentations to professionals in several mental health–related fields on a variety of specialty counseling areas, including resiliency development in the schools; violence, substance abuse, and HIV/AIDS prevention for children and adolescents; and working effectively with Mexican American/Hispanic children and youth. She is currently editor for the *TCA Journal* of the Texas Counseling Association. She can be reached at e.taylor@tcu.edu.

Part 2

Critical Issues in Leader Empowerment

Establishing a New Position: *District Director of Guidance*

Gloria Larivee
Rolla School District
Rolla, Missouri

A Leader's Three Rs: *Reading, Reflecting, and Relationships*

Debbie Krueger
Northside Independent School District
San Antonio, Texas

Leader Empowerment

Effective guidance program staff leaders have the training and experience needed to carry out their jobs. Empowered leaders have sufficient authority delegated to them to support their work with staff and on behalf of the program. Effective and empowered leaders accept and are able to carry out responsibility for the program and for the performance of their staff members. They identify and make good use of the bases of their power, and they successfully advocate for the guidance program and staff.

The assignment and training of empowered guidance program staff leaders at the building and district levels are keys to successful comprehensive guidance program implementation (Henderson & Gysbers, 1998). Where appropriately trained and responsible leaders are in place, comprehensive guidance program staff stay focused on attaining the desired results with students, on aligning the implemented program with the designed program, on developing highest quality job performance, and on developing and maintaining productive relationships with staff and other program leaders. This combination results in continuously enhanced program implementation. Where no leader (or an ineffective one) is designated as the "person in charge," individual staff members, clients, and supporters easily lose their focus on the designed program. If the program is threatened by detractors or destructive forces, there is no one to mount a response.

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Chapter Three

Establishing a New Position: *District Director of Guidance*

Gloria Larivee
Rolla School District, Rolla Missouri

Rolla, located in south-central Missouri, is unusual for a rural community because of the presence of the University of Missouri–Rolla, a top-rated engineering school. More than 25 other state and federal agencies are located in Rolla, including the U.S. Geological Survey, and Fort Leonard Wood is only a short distance away. A large percentage of parents work in professional positions and are very involved in the community and schools.

The Rolla Public School District has a population of approximately 4,500 students in grades K–12. Additionally, the district has a vocational-technical center that is a host school for students from 12 school districts. Each year 300 to 350 Rolla High School students attend vocational programming in one of the two buildings. The district has one high school, serving grades 10–12, with a population of approximately 1,100 students. The junior high school consists of grades 8 and 9; the middle school houses grades 5 to 7, and there are three elementary schools. There are 11 counselors in the district.

Job Description

Until I was hired, the Rolla Public Schools had no director of guidance. The guidance program was under the supervision of an assistant superintendent. The superintendent, who was relatively new to the district, had a goal of creating a director of guidance position. This superintendent had experienced effective guidance programs in other districts and recognized the need for districtwide coordination.

To initiate a candidate search, a job description was developed describing the qualifications desired in applicants. Counselor certification and experience were considered an absolute, as was leadership experience. Additionally,

experience with the Missouri Comprehensive Guidance Program and a broad vision of how the guidance program would fit with all other educational programming was considered essential. A working knowledge of the Missouri School Improvement Program, the Missouri Assessment Program, and other state and federal initiatives were desired. Excellent communication skills, too, were considered critical. In recognition that organizational and communication patterns were important, the director of guidance would report directly to the superintendent and serve on the district leadership team.

The preceding description clearly indicates that the superintendent and board of education spent considerable time developing the role the director of guidance would play in the Rolla Public Schools. Their assumption was that counselors would be pleased to have "one of their own" coordinating guidance activities and advocating for them. When I was hired, I expected some resistance, but I also assumed the counselors would view this new position in a positive way.

First Challenge: Resistance

> Leaders understand that resistance to change is common, especially when not only the leader but the leadership position are new. We recognize that change is difficult and takes time. Our challenge is getting people involved and having them feel ownership in the change process. This process reminds me of a popular joke: "How many psychiatrists does it take to change a light bulb? . . . One—but only if the light bulb really wants to be changed." A key issue for guidance leaders is getting administrators and counselors in the district sincerely to want to change the way they have been doing business.

Without a director of guidance, counselors in the Rolla School District had operated in their own building "silos." Each counselor was comfortable with what he or she was doing and did not give much thought to what was going on in the other buildings. With no coordination among buildings, no organized district meetings, and no districtwide goals, the school counselor was not accountable to anyone other than the building principal. Many principals did not understand the concept of comprehensive guidance, and some did not agree with it. As a result, some counselors were encouraged to engage—and were engaging—in many non-guidance activities. For example, one counselor was spending a large percentage of time developing the master schedule and performing other computer-related activities. It was apparent that two things needed to happen right away: (a) an in-service for the building administrators on comprehensive guidance, and (b) a time and task analysis to assess exactly how the counselors were spending their time.

Considerable effort was spent in developing a time and task analysis form that would consume little of the counselors' time. All forms were to be sent to me, and I would be responsible for compiling all the information. I thought the process had been simplified to the point where it would be relatively painless. Although I expected some hesitation, I was not prepared for the amount of resistance that followed. Not only did the counselors resist being accountable for their time, their administrators did not want them to be! There was a general feeling that the counselors had managed just fine in the past and had done so without being accountable for their time. If they were now being asked to document their activities, someone must think they were not doing their jobs.

Over time a niche had been carved out for counselors in each building, and neither the counselors nor the administrators wanted that to change. I naively thought the counselors would view the time and task analysis as an opportunity to show how many non-guidance activities they were doing and to get rid of some of these activities. I soon came to realize that many of the counselors enjoyed the non-guidance activities and did not want these responsibilities minimized. The administrators also were resistant because they liked having the counselors do tasks that otherwise would have to be reassigned. The counselors convinced the administrators that the time and task analysis was unnecessary. Their attitude was, "If it's not broken, don't fix it." Administrators were comfortable with what passed for a guidance program in their buildings and did not see a need for change. They did not want to explore the non-guidance responsibilities their counselors were performing or ways of reassigning these responsibilities, and they certainly were not interested in redefining the role of the counselor. They were comfortable with the status quo. I quickly realized that my new leadership position would be considerably more challenging than I had expected!

Second Challenge: Building Support

At this point, having the support of the superintendent and the board of education was critical. Even though some of the administrators did not like the direction the district was heading, they knew they had to be at least somewhat cooperative because I had the backing of district leaders. However, I wanted them to cooperate because they believed in the value of the change. I believe it is imperative that the stakeholders in an organization take ownership in the change process. [There is a large literature on the "change process"– consult ERIC for references. Also Allen (1998).] Without the stakeholders embracing the changes, the ideas never truly become incorporated into the organization. I didn't want the changes I initiated to be one more document placed in a nice notebook

on a shelf. Convincing the stakeholders that the desired change would be good for everyone, especially the students, became the real challenge. In taking on the challenge of getting as many of the administrators on board as possible, I remembered to focus on the 80-20 rule. I decided to concentrate my energy where I thought it would be most beneficial, rather than spending 80% of my time on the 20% that most likely would never change. I knew this process would take time and would have to be based on mutual trust and respect. I also knew that I would have to earn my stripes.

My first task was to develop strategies to break down the barriers while garnering support from other sources. I knew it was important to get the counselors to think as a team and understand the "big picture." I scheduled monthly luncheon meetings with the main purpose of building camaraderie and a sense of teamwork. The agenda was always brief, allowing time for each counselor to share activities going on in his or her building and to network with peers. Work and in-service training sessions were scheduled on professional development days, when more time was available.

Prior to my arrival, each building had a guidance advisory committee made up of parents; however, no districtwide committee had ever been formed. Because I believe that a representative sample of the various publics served needs to be represented on an advisory committee in order to have open, honest dialogue, I asked each counselor to nominate one parent to serve on a districtwide advisory committee. Additional people were added to represent community resources and expertise. The committee was apprised of the district strategic plan and the district guidance goals the counselors had developed in their team meetings. They were provided with an orientation about what a comprehensive guidance program entails and the counselor's role in each of the four components of the program. The committee was asked to provide the counselors with input about the community's perception of their role. Currently results from a needs assessment are also being studied. The committee also is helping establish community partnerships to meet some of the established goals. These committee members are now advocates for a true comprehensive guidance program, and their expectations are to see that happen in the district.

Initial Changes

Initially I focused on three areas for change: professional development, performance evaluation, and budget.

Professional Development

In terms of correlating professional development activities with district goals, the schools' professional development activities had lacked

coordination. Previously, the building principal had approved the counselors' leave requests. I instituted a policy whereby the building principal approves the request and forwards it to me for final approval. The goal of this policy is to ensure that the counselors are participating in professional development activities that coincide with district guidance goals and to eliminate training that does not enhance counseling skills or meet district guidance goals. In addition, more professional development is now being provided within the district to help counselors refine their skills and develop new skills that are necessary to meet identified needs.

When the idea of an in-service on comprehensive guidance was proposed, many of the building administrators felt they were already well versed in the model; however, I believed a refresher would probably be a good investment of time and money. Although research is available to document the positive effect that a fully implemented guidance program has on a school district, I wanted the administrators to hear from some of their peers who had experienced it. I contacted the director of guidance at another district in the state that has an excellent guidance program. She and the assistant superintendent, who was instrumental in the implementation of the guidance program, came and spent the day with the administrators discussing the change process that had occurred in their district. They gave practical suggestions on how to reassign non-guidance duties and discussed the many positive changes that had occurred in their district as a result of their comprehensive program. The meeting gave the administrators an opportunity to discuss their concerns, ask questions, and get answers. A lot of good dialogue took place, and I sensed a change in attitudes from that point forward.

Performance Evaluation

In the past evaluations were done by the building administrator, who often had little understanding of the role of the counselor and the components of a comprehensive guidance program. To correct this situation, the district human resources director worked with the guidance team and me to develop a new evaluation process that reflected the components of a comprehensive guidance program. This new process will be implemented during the next school year. The building administrator still has the ultimate responsibility for evaluating the counselor, with input from the director of guidance. The director will work cooperatively with the building administrator to determine how effectively the components of the guidance program are being implemented. Input from the director will be incorporated into the summative evaluation.

Budget

Budget is another issue that will be changed in the next school year. When the director of guidance position was created, a budget was established, but it is only for districtwide activities. The building principal still controlled the budget for supplies, professional development activities, and equipment at the building level. In most buildings, the guidance department currently is not allocated a specific amount. If the counselors need something, the request goes to the principal, who decides if money is available. Next year the director of guidance will have a budget based on identified program needs. This will help counselors plan for their activities because they will know how much money is available.

Lessons Learned

Clearly, this journey has not been a smooth one. During the past few years I have learned many things. One is that my enthusiam is not necessarily contagious. I have learned that no matter what kind of credentials I have, I still have to earn my stripes. I have been reminded that change is a slow—in some cases very slow—process. I have learned that in order to survive and grow in this type of leadership position, I must be very passionate about my cause. Without total commitment to my task, I could not persevere. I have also learned that some aspects of being a director of guidance are difficult. Making administrative decisions sometimes takes me out of my comfort zone. Professional peer groups are not as available in this position as in most others. Many Missouri school districts do not have a director of guidance, particularly in the rural areas. There is a definite need for more networking. Although I appreciate the support I have found in my district and in the community, being able to network with others in similar positions is invaluable.

This journey has taken several twists and turns, sometimes moving forward and sometimes regressing. There are many days when I have to remind myself that this is, after all, a work in progress. The ultimate goal is providing better opportunities for our students, which is what makes all the effort worthwhile!

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About the Author

Gloria Larivee has been director of guidance for the Rolla School District in Missouri for six years. Her current responsibilities also include being coordinator of the Missouri School Improvement Program. Previously, she has been a high school counselor, has worked in the departments of Teacher Certification and Professional Development in the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, has been a counselor in a mental health center, has taught gifted students, and has been an adjunct faculty member at several Missouri graduate schools. In addition, she has been a Missouri state trainer for several statewide guidance-related projects. She can be reached at glarivee@rolla.k12.mo.us.

Chapter Four

A Leader's Three Rs: *Reading, Reflecting, and Relationships*

Debbie Krueger
Northside Independent School District, San Antonio, Texas

When first asked to write about empowering leadership, I thought, "What could I add? I've read it all from others." In my 28 years in education, I have been a teacher, an elementary counselor, and for the past five years, a district coordinator for the Student Advisory Program and supervisor to 92 elementary counselors. In each of these roles, I have had someone who has helped me to build my capacity to make decisions and has trusted me as a professional to step up to the task and lead. As an elementary counselor, I participated in professional organizations and district-level leadership roles for site-based decision making; advocated for our program at the state legislature; and gave presentations at local, state, and national conferences and to our local school board.

Empowering Myself

In my present position, I work in a team that fosters collegiality, and I rely on collaboration in all my roles and responsibilities. The interpersonal and behavior styles and skills of the team members are varied, but our greatest strength is our diversity. I am able to plan activities on the basis of program priorities using my own style. I have been made to feel competent as I have used my knowledge and skills to overcome problems through action planning for success. It is my job then to take that plan to the groups and individuals whom I lead to assist them in becoming independent and self-managing. There are structures in place to guide them in their work, standards for accountability, and a way to self-evaluate and reflect on achievement.

Then, again, the list of traits, competencies, and skills of a leader includes reflecting and continuously developing as an effective leader who balances tasks and relationships. As a leader, I also should model Covey's (1990)

characteristics of a principle-centered leader by being a continuous learner, being service-oriented, having positive energy, believing in others' ability and being synergistic. To this list Henderson and Gysbers (1998) add being consistent, confident, trusting of my own instincts in challenging situations, and reflective. Wow! Reading that list makes a leader wonder, "How will I do and be *all* that?"

I am growing to realize the priceless nature of time. We all need more time, more fun, and less stress in our lives. Therefore, as leaders we must first take extraordinary care of ourselves before we can make a difference in the lives of others. Although we are empowered internally, part of that empowerment stems from the positive interpersonal relationships we are able to build with others. Consequently this section of the paper will be about how I have taken those words and applied them to my everyday work. I hope that you will find some helpful suggestions for empowerment in it.

The saying, "No one cares how much you know until they know how much you care," applies to students *and* adults. We need to be cheerleaders—people with a passion for our vision. We empower others by looking for the best in them and building on their strengths. Empowerment occurs through affirmation, trust, and all the other ingredients that contribute to building meaningful and sustaining relationships. Oftentimes we leaders serve as a mirror, and as such we are able to reflect back to others the qualities that they might not always be able to see in themselves. As the saying goes, "I am not what I think I am, I am not what you think I am, I am what I think you think I am."

Bases of Power

I have studied the different power bases involved in leading and empowering others that are listed in Pat Henderson's and Norm Gysbers' book, *Leading and Managing Your School Guidance Program Staff* (1998). I have applied this information in my own role in leading change in my school district. The following sections list the different power bases with brief examples of how I have applied them. As a leader, you have each of these powers. Use them to nurture, motivate, and empower others.

Power comes from a variety of sources, as described in Henderson and Gysbers (1998): legitimate, resource, coercive, connection, expert, referent, and reward. Leaders must establish their power as resources capable of meeting the perceived need of their followers. Second, they use this power to influence their followers toward desired changes and to carry out their responsibilities.

Legitimate Power

To empower others, you first have to empower yourself. Reading and reflecting is one way to accomplish this. Additionally, you have to know the power bases that you work from. The first power base is legitimate—power you have because you have been selected for a position or task (Henderson & Gysbers, 1998). Someone has said, "We have confidence in you, you are respected. There is a high level of trust, be accountable." The higher the level of trust, the more powerful the person and the program. Now that you have been selected, help others to become great leaders. Model excellence.

In my district, elementary cluster leaders are building-level leaders whose role and responsibility it is to lead and support a group of 11 to 14 counselors from six or seven elementary schools. Cluster leaders are invited by building-level counselors to visit their campuses twice a year to provide feedback on beginning- and end-of-the-year reports and program management. In responding to an electronic-mail survey on how they empower the counselors they work with, these leaders responded with several comments:

- "One of the most important things is to provide a climate of caring, trust, and acceptance during our cluster meetings."
- "Provide time for each person to share with the group."
- "It is important to have a common goal."
- It is important "to use each group member's talents and abilities for the benefit of the group."
- "Delegate tasks that others are good at and show much appreciation for their skills."
- "Ask for advice or consultation from others in their area of expertise."

After training campus-level leaders for the Student Advisory Program, cluster leaders were asked to describe how the faculty and students would know their new roles. Among their responses were these:

- "Principal announces new position at faculty meeting and recommits to the program in the introduction."
- "Announcement of new position was made in the school newsletter to parents, a student did an interview on my new role, and 'Congratulations to Mrs._____ for her new responsibilities as campus facilitator' was posted on the marquee."

Resource Power

The resource power base derives from having the capacity to understand the bigger picture, having current and needed information, and being trusted by the organization, which guarantees you will have input into decisions. One resource is obviously money—the acquisition and

distribution of the program budget based on student needs. Facts and information about issues constitute other resources. Part of this power base is also being able to envision what students need and how the program can help meet those needs.

My role as district-level coordinator for the Student Advisory Program was created as part of the Northside Independent School District Strategic Plan. The community believed strongly that it was important for students to learn to set goals, create a plan to achieve them, and evaluate their progress. My job has been to take their words and put them into action by designing and developing a framework and providing training for teachers so they become advisors who can teach and guide students in setting, implementing, and evaluating goals related to learning, service, and responsibility.

Coercive Power

Coercive power is the type that says, "Be afraid of me for fear of negative consequences." It should be your last resort. There is definitely a place and time for coercion, but the empowering leader practices the maxim "praise in public, criticize in private; praise what is right and train for what is wrong." Some examples of my use of coercive power are:

- School counselors are people too, and if they get into an unhealthy relationship situation, the leader may need to use mediation, conflict resolution, and confrontation skills to relieve stress and tension.
- Cluster leaders have realized through their studies and visits that coercion is the strength behind them. They can be more directive in their actions toward team building.

Connection Power

The fourth type of power, connection, is related to legitimate power. Connection power is based on having connections with those who are influential. People want information, and it is the leader's responsibility to provide it or know where to find it. Here are examples of connection power:

- After visiting a campus where I have observed outstanding lessons, I e-mail the campus principal or the assistant superintendent for administration to praise the teacher, advisor, or leader. I then write a personal note to let that individual know what a great lesson it was and how much I appreciate his or her support for the program and the kids.
- In district-level staffing meetings, when I hear information that can be helpful to the programs, I pass it along to the cluster leaders and facilitators. In turn, I provide information at the district level that can help other programs connect to ours.

Expert Power

Expert power comes from having the professional expertise, skills, knowledge, and confidence to make something happen. But to use this power, you must be able to communicate your knowledge and use your organizational skills to problem solve. Having expertise can garner respect. You don't demand respect, you earn it through the ways you relate, react, and respond to others on a daily basis. Here are examples:

- Cluster leaders receive training in supervision from the director of guidance and are provided summer institutes for additional staff development.
- Cluster leaders meet monthly to review a specific case and receive feedback that will support their supervision. They also develop the agenda for the following round of meetings where district information is communicated and skills are imparted.
- Staff team meetings are held regularly, for the right reasons, and for a purpose.

Referent Power

The sixth power base is referent. It is based on you bringing your own style to your leadership role. Be aware of your style and match it to people and situations. Find common values, attitudes, opinions, and experiences. You will get people to adhere to your vision by attracting them, not by forcing them. Covey (1994) defines synergy as being achieved when two or more people work together to create a better solution than either could alone. The attitude is to seek "not your way or my way but a better way." It's like a flock of geese that fly stronger and further by flying in a V. Synergy doesn't just happen. It is a process. You have to get there.

Each month I have networking meetings for the leadership teams that have been through goal-setting and advisory training. The purpose is to share information, discuss concerns of program implementation, and celebrate student successes. This meeting is optional and is held after school from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. Each month 100 to 120 people attend. That response says to me that there is a need for purposeful reflection time, collegiality, and support. Counselors are motivated to attend because they receive needed information in a fun and reflective way, see the power of being a change agent, and are validated for their work, all in caring climate.

Reward Power

The seventh and final power base is reward. For most people, the primary reward is money or a salary. I have limited power over financial

compensation, other than stipends, but I can help people see other rewards. Henderson and Gysbers (1998) suggest that other rewards are achievement (what others think you did), the work itself (what you really do), responsibility (what you help others do), advancement (what you think you can do), and growth (what you believe you might do).

- In the district's second strategic plan, committee members recommended campus-level leadership for the Student Advisory Program to ensure implementation. Most people were skeptical of our ability to accomplish this, but after the third year we were able to receive stipends for the eight schools that are implementing the program, with more to follow in the next annual budget.
- During the month following the facilitators' training, I went to each campus, took the facilitator to breakfast or lunch, and listened to his or her first-month concerns and celebrations. The facilitators were thrilled with our hour together.
- Facilitators, counselors, and my own secretary have shared their goals with me, and now those dreams are being achieved: My secretary is returning to school to finish her degree and become a teacher. One teacher is pursuing her master's degree, another is earning bilingual certification, and a third is applying to a doctoral program.

Learning Resources

I am empowered by information I have read in many books:

- *Principle-Centered Leadership* and *First Things First,* by Stephen Covey;
- *On Becoming a Leader,* by Warren Bennis;
- *Building Community in Schools* and *Leadership for the Schoolhouse,* by Thomas J. Sergiovanni;
- *If You Don't Feed the Teachers, They Eat the Students,* by Neila Connors;
- *Who Moved My Cheese?* by Spencer Johnson, M.D.; and
- *Leading and Managing Your School Guidance Program Staff,* by Pat Henderson and Norm Gysbers

If you are not familiar with these books, I encourage you to seek them out immediately in your favorite bookstore or library or online. What I have learned and what I do as a leader comes from applying what I have read and from the three Rs of leadership: Reading, Reflecting, and Relationships.

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About the Author

Debbie Krueger has been for six years the coordinator of student advisory programs in Northside Independent School District, San Antonio, Texas. In addition to developing the Goal-Setting Student Advisory Program, her job responsibilities include coordinating the district's elementary school counselors and training the building-level leaders of these programs. Prior to her current administrative position, she was an elementary school counselor and a special education teacher. She can be reached at DebbieKrueger@nisd.net or at 5309 Wurzbach Road, Suite 100, San Antonio, TX 78238.

Part 3

Critical Issues in Identifying and Displacing Non-Guidance Activities

Displacing Non-Guidance Tasks and Initiating Program Improvements: *Data Collection Initiatives and Program Innovations*

Judy Madden
Montgomery County Public Schools
Montgomery County, Maryland

Sharing Responsibility for Schoolwide Testing Programs: *No NGAs in Our Schools*

Judy Petersen
Granite School District
Salt Lake City, Utah

Identifying and Displacing Non-Guidance Activities

Non-guidance tasks are defined as those that do not fit into the comprehensive guidance program mission or design, or as those that do not require a master's degree in school guidance and counseling to carry out. These tasks are often among the "baggage" that comes with larger assignments; for example, responsibility for the implementation of schoolwide testing programs. Non-guidance tasks include administrative, clerical, instructional, or student supervision activities (Gysbers & Henderson, 2000). Examples of administrative tasks are building master schedules or testing schedules. Examples of clerical tasks are entering data, setting up meetings, writing notes or letters on behalf of a principal, counting test booklets, and sharpening pencils for testing. Examples of instructional tasks are covering classes for teachers, tutoring students in reading or math, or teaching students about the content-related subjects on a test. Examples of student supervision tasks are doing lunch or hall duty, chaperoning field trips, or proctoring students taking tests.

When guidance departments are assigned a greater number of such tasks than are assigned to other departments, disproportionate amounts of time are taken from guidance program delivery, and the integrity of the guidance program is impaired. If these tasks are indeed essential to a school's operation, displacement of these activities from the guidance department to some other department becomes a critical issue. Recapturing this time allows school counselors and other guidance program staff to implement a fully designed comprehensive guidance program, enhance the program, or add needed activities. If time-consuming non-guidance activities are not displaced, a program design based on optimal use of the allocated resources cannot be fully implemented and is therefore impaired. Additionally, if the professional talent of school counselors is recognized and put to good use, school counselors are respected as having a special professional identity within the school. If, however, school counselors are used, and allow themselves to be used, as quasi-administrators, clerks, para-educators, or student aides, they are perceived as non-professionals.

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Chapter Five

Displacing Non-Guidance Tasks and Initiating Program Improvements: *Data Collection Initiatives and Program Innovations*

Judy Madden
Montgomery County Public Schools, Maryland

Performs related duties as required.

Those words can be frightening for many of us. Taken from the job description of school counselors in the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) and similar to countless descriptions of counselors' responsibilities in school systems across the nation, that open-ended phrase invites the possibility of non-guidance tasks dominating the counselor's day and impeding the implementation of a comprehensive guidance program. Secondary-school counselors tell tales of spending hours building master schedules or chasing students to encourage them to participate in community-sponsored events that depend on counselors for recruitment. Their elementary-school colleagues report that doing playground duty, providing testing accommodations, or covering classes interferes with their time with children. Although some might see any of these activities as another opportunity to talk with students, most see them as tasks unrelated to the real work of counselors. This year, MCPS has chosen to address the challenge of counselors being assigned non-guidance tasks through a combination of data collection and innovative initiatives designed to highlight the power of a fully implemented guidance program.

Montgomery County Public Schools

MCPS is a Maryland district that borders on Washington, DC, and sits 34 miles southwest of Baltimore. Our 124 elementary schools, 35 middle schools, 23 high schools, 1 career/technological high school, and 6 special

centers served an enrollment of 134,180 students in the 2000–01 school year. This record enrollment is up 3,491 from the year before, and total enrollment has grown by 47% since 1983. This growth makes us the 12th fastest growing district in the United States. As our student population increases, so does its diversity. Five of every ten students in MCPS are classified as African American, Asian American, Hispanic, or Native American. For the first time this year, no one group represents a majority of the total enrollment. The backgrounds of our students encompass 138 foreign countries and 119 different languages spoken at home. English language learners make up 8% of our school population, with the fastest growing portion of these youngsters being born in the United States. Poverty is a growing concern; 21.8% of our students qualify for free and reduced meals. Our cultural, racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic diversity is both a strength and a challenge as our district seeks to prepare students for the new information-based economy that is making unprecedented demands for a highly educated workforce.

Montgomery County citizens expect their students to achieve. The national movement to raise academic standards and student performance has touched MCPS, as it has virtually every school district nationwide. Growing national and state emphasis on standardized testing has filtered to the local community, and everyone is seeking results. In MCPS, many youngsters have experienced high success rates. Others, however, have achieved less than their academic potential. The gap in student performance by race and ethnicity is most pronounced in results for major academic assessments such as the SAT. An intensive focus on closing the achievement gap while maintaining high standards for all youngsters has been the consistent cornerstone of recent board of education priorities and superintendent initiatives in MCPS.

Guidance Program

In Montgomery County, counselors are seen as playing a key role in optimizing the educational experience for all students. Through fostering the acquisition of essential knowledge and skills and addressing barriers to learning, counselors contribute significantly to academic performance. Student-to-counselor ratios are above the 250:1 ratio recommended by the American School Counselor Association (ASCA), and counselor ratios have been targeted for improvement in the latest budget cycle. Currently, middle schools and high schools are staffed at an average ratio of 283:1. Each of our 124 elementary schools has a counselor, although 24 schools are still staffed with a part-time professional.

In MCPS, school counselors have delivered services under the framework

of a comprehensive developmental program since 1985. MCPS counselors, in collaboration with school staff, deliver competencies in the areas of academic achievement, educational/career development, and personal/social development to all students in pre-K to 12th grade. The four critical program components delineated by Gysbers and Henderson (2000) are well established foundations of the MCPS Comprehensive Guidance and Counseling Program (CGCP). Every counselor knows that each school's program is to be built upon classroom and group guidance in the county competencies, responsive counseling, individual planning, and system support. Year-end program monitoring requires reporting on needs assessment activities, program implementation, and program evaluation. New counselor induction occurs annually and is designed to ensure that our novices are as grounded in the CGCP as our veterans are.

History of Support

MCPS has a long history of providing support to school counselors so that they may use their professional expertise more effectively. In addition to a guidance secretary at each middle and high school, the high schools are staffed with two other support services staff members who assist the counseling department. Through a position established in 1965, the school registrar performs a variety of tasks in the registration and transfer of students and in the preparation and maintenance of student records and transcripts. Registrars maintain and disseminate student records and communicate with colleges, universities, national testing services, and employers about them. The career information coordinator position, first established in 1973, was staffed at each high school by the late 1970s. The career information coordinators perform specialized work in helping students explore postsecondary options. In collaboration with the school counselors, the career information coordinators develop and implement a comprehensive career guidance and career information program, including the development of a college reference facility to assist students in all aspects of college planning. The career information coordinators have unique expertise in the financial aid/scholarship process, and establish contacts in the educational and business communities essential to gathering and disseminating information about career planning and employment opportunities. The guidance secretary, registrar, and career information coordinator at the high school level are utilized in alignment with the ASCA *Position Statement* (1999) on support staff and are supervised by the resource counselor of each department. These invaluable support services personnel address many of the clerical and routine responsibilities of the counseling department, allowing the certified school counselors more time to provide services through their

comprehensive program.

Non-Guidance Task Assignments

Despite the comprehensive developmental program that forms the foundation of MCPS counseling services and the support provided by paraprofessionals, many of our counselors, particularly at the secondary level, still report that non-guidance tasks are consuming their workday. Anecdotal tales abound of being unable to serve students because of other duties deemed "related" by administrators. Numerous requests from the central administrators and community partners to involve counselors in recruiting youngsters to participate in special events—such as recognition ceremonies, festivals, information fairs, and workshops championed by a variety of community groups—threaten to swamp counselors' e-mail with an almost daily list of new "hot items." Although each individual request may not seem significant, the cumulative effect is great. Guidance Unit staff, increasingly concerned about the effect of these activities on the counselors' capacity to deliver the CGCP, are collecting data on the kind and number of community requests that demand counselor time.

Data Collection

In an attempt to develop a realistic portrait of program implementation and the impact of various responsibilities on the counselors' daily work, the MCPS Guidance Unit, in partnership with the school system's Office of Shared Accountability (OSA), has undertaken a time on tasks survey for the 2000–01 school year. Using as a starting-off point the Time and Task Analysis Form from the Missouri comprehensive program model (Starr and Gysbers, 1988, p. 93) cited by Johnson and Whitfield (Johnson and Whitfield, 1991, p. 39), specialists in the two departments crafted a study that attempts to collect data from all our school-based and ESOL counselors in a reasonable, systematic way. A questionnaire was generated that explores the time spent on individual student planning and case management, guidance curriculum, responsive counseling, school program support, and non-guidance activities such as bus duty, lunch duty, class size balancing, master schedules, etc. Each counselor was randomly assigned one workday during each quarterly marking period and asked to answer the questions in relation to that day. By the end of the school year, each counselor will complete the questionnaire four times, enabling us to gather data that yield a reasonably accurate indication of the kinds of tasks counselors perform throughout the year and how much time is spent on them.

Preliminary data have been obtained from the first two quarters of the year. During the first quarter, 251 counselors of a possible 370 responded; 248 completed the questionnaire in the second marking period, with elementary-school counselors returning the survey at a slightly higher rate than their secondary-school colleagues. OSA staff have determined that the return reflects a valid representative sample. Although these early results have not yet been disaggregated by school level, community demographics, position, or number of years in the profession, they still paint an initial picture of program implementation. As Table 1 indicates, a majority of counselors report spending their surveyed day in the delivery of key responsive program services rather than on non-guidance tasks such as doing lunch or bus duty, building a master schedule, or balancing class size. Other kinds of non-guidance tasks, such as distributing information about community activities and recruiting students to participate in them, are subsumed under the Other 1, Other 2, and Other 3 items.

Table 1. Results of Counselors' Time on Tasks Survey, 2000–01 School Year

Task	Quarter 1 % of Counselors Engaging in Task on Selected Day	Quarter 2 % of Counselors Engaging in Task on Selected Day
Implement guidance curriculum in individual classrooms	37.4	33.1
Confer with classroom teachers, parents, and administrators regarding educational needs of students	88.3	87.5
Provide individual responsive counseling to students for educational/academic concerns	67.7	68.5
Provide individual responsive counseling to students for social/emotional concerns	75.3	71.7
Provide individual responsive counseling to students for educational decision-making concerns	34.2	33.8
Provide group responsive counseling	27.0	27.0
Meet with parents about their children	66.5	66.5
Perform lunch or bus duty	3.1	2.8
Balance class size	6.2	6.0
Build a master schedule	2.0	2.4
Other 1	2.5	2.1
Other 2	5.2	2.8
Other 3	6.0	4.0

Source: MCPS Guidance Unit Time on Tasks Survey.

The survey also asks counselors to report on their involvement with standardized testing. Initial results from the first two quarters suggest that only a small percentage of our counselors are engaged in test coordination or administration, with a higher percentage counseling students about test results (see Table 2).

Table 2. Counselors' Time Spent in Standardized Testing, 2000-01 School Year

Task	Quarter 1 % of Counselors Engaging in Task on Selected Day	Quarter 2 % of Counselors Engaging in Task on Selected Day
Coordinate/administer AP, IB, MSPAP, PSAT, PLAN, ACT, MD State Functional Tests	4.6	5.2
Counsel students on assessments/achievement tests	5.0	5.2

Source: MCPS Guidance Unit Time on Tasks Survey.

Experience suggests that these percentages will change in the third and fourth quarters, when counselors play a more active role in the spring administration of local, state, and national assessments. Many elementary counselors in MCPS find themselves providing accommodations for youngsters with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) or 504 plans as schools short on support staff involve every adult not classroom bound to assist with test administration. Some middle school counselors may also provide accommodations, although that is less likely. Rarely do high school counselors provide direct services in test administration, although occasionally they are tapped as proctors. Instead, high school counselors collaborate with the career information coordinators and other school staff to make sure students understand the tests and their implications, are aware of deadlines, and are prepared for the testing experience. Although some may view counselor involvement in schoolwide testing as peripheral to guidance, these activities actually are very important in the individual planning component of the program and align with suggested competencies in the National Standards in Academic Development (Dahir, Sheldon, and Valiga, 1998, p. 9). Counselors at all levels have a key role in helping students, staff, and parents understand standardized test data. Counselors interpret test results, help all youngsters and their parents put test results into appropriate perspective and context, and help young people use the results as one tool among many in educational planning and decision making. Score reports from assessments such as the PSAT provide counselors with a useful vehicle for helping students improve achievement through applying a

metacognitive approach to error analysis and test-taking strategies. Test management and coordination may be tasks appropriately shared among school staff with the help of paraprofessionals, but using assessment results in educational goal setting is a vital function of the professional school counselor.

Because the Time on Tasks Survey data are so preliminary, it is difficult to draw conclusions from them. Questions from the first and second quarters asking counselors how much time they spend on each program component, as well as on non-guidance tasks, have yet to be thoroughly analyzed. Additional information from the third and fourth quarters must be collected and studied. When the Time on Tasks Survey is completed at the end of the school year, Guidance Unit and OSP staff will analyze the results carefully. Trends tied to time of year, school level, years of experience, school demographics, and other variables will be spotlighted and used for staff development for both counselors and administrators, as well as for program planning. Obstacles to program implementation, including the proliferation of non-guidance tasks, will be identified through survey data and coupled with information gleaned from the year-end program reports required of every counselor. Guidance Unit leaders and representatives from all school counseling venues, in collaboration with school administrators, will use the data analysis to highlight appropriate next steps to ensure a more thorough implementation of the CGCP during the 2001–02 school year.

Program Innovations

Besides continuing to collect and analyze Time on Tasks Survey results, our district is engaging in a number of other activities designed to minimize counselors' involvement in non-guidance activities while enhancing the appropriate application of their unique expertise.

Restructuring the Department of Student Services

As part of the school system's urgent agenda to close the achievement gap between racial and ethnic groups, a major restructuring of the Department of Student Services (DSS), the department that houses school counseling, is underway. This initiative emphasizes the importance of transdisciplinary service delivery involving school counselors, psychologists, pupil personnel workers, and nurses. The model stresses the need for a continuum of services for students, ranging from prevention to early intervention, intensive intervention, and crisis support. Developed collaboratively among the disciplines and with community partners, this service model will guide the work of DSS staff for the near future. As program accountability is refined, focus will be placed

increasingly on those services that foster student achievement, while activities that do not support a successful school experience will be de-emphasized or eliminated. Non-guidance tasks will be under further scrutiny.

Conducting Professional Performance Evaluations

At the same time, MCPS counselors, along with their colleagues from other disciplines, are collaborating with colleagues in the Department of Human Resources and the teachers' union to accomplish a major revision of the professional evaluation process. A work group of counselors has generated a series of standards, performance criteria, and exemplars to be used to evaluate their professional effectiveness. Although this process is still evolving, it promises to have a substantial effect on improving practice. The emphasis is on best practices that are tied to program implementation, are observable, and are applicable to all settings. Training for school administrators is planned for the 2001–02 school year so that each principal will be aware of the counseling standards and how they may be demonstrated. The revised process highlights the comprehensive developmental guidance program and concentrates the evaluation on the most essential aspects of the counselor's role. Counselors participating in the work group are passionate in their commitment to the very best in counseling and hope that this evaluation vehicle will help them move more and more non-guidance tasks from their plates.

Making Targeted Improvements Based on Action Research

In addition to these exciting initiatives, MCPS counselors are embarking on yet another endeavor that promises to support an emphasis on significant guidance activities rather than non-guidance tasks. An intrepid group of counselors has established an action research group with expert guidance from the Office of School Performance and the Office of Instruction and Program Development. These pioneers are using needs assessments and school data to identify a specific problem they wish to address, reviewing relevant literature, implementing an intervention, and then gauging its effectiveness through the collection of student performance data. They meet regularly to deepen their understanding of the action research model, build and refine skills, coach one another through any challenges that arise, and applaud one another's successes. The group has showcased their results at a year-end Best Practices Resource Fair held in May 2001 for all school counselors. By learning, practicing, and modeling the action research approach, this bold group

of counselors is providing their colleagues with a tool that can be used to demonstrate program effectiveness. As more and more counselors are able to connect their program with student outcomes, the value of a fully realized comprehensive developmental program will become increasingly evident to administrators, parents, students, and to counselors themselves. Fewer and fewer will tolerate spending precious professional time and talent on non-guidance tasks when well-implemented programs are shown to support student success.

Summary

As a group, counselors are perceived as flexible, friendly professionals always willing to help, no matter what the task. Far too often, this has resulted in "related duties as required" expanding to consume counselors' time and thwart the effective implementation of the comprehensive guidance and counseling program. This year, MCPS has chosen to confront this issue by mounting a multipronged approach that includes data collection, development of a transdisciplinary service provision model, revision of the counselor evaluation process, and building of action research skills. Although results of these initiatives are not yet available, these exciting activities promise to boost program accountability; enhance stakeholder awareness of the vital contribution counseling programs make to student success; suggest staff development themes to sustain best practices; and ultimately reduce the amount of time certified, well-trained counseling professionals spend on non-guidance tasks. Other guidance leaders seeking to address the concern of counselors being overwhelmed with non-guidance tasks must begin with data collection to assess the problem. Once the challenge has been defined, it will be tackled most productively through a variety of approaches designed to underscore the relationship between the successful implementation of a comprehensive developmental program and student achievement.

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About the Author

Judy Madden has been supervisor of guidance for the Montgomery County Public Schools in Maryland for three years. Previously she has served as a pupil personnel worker, an elementary counselor specialist, an elementary counselor, and a special education teacher and consultant. She has held leadership positions in both counseling and parent-teacher associations. Both have awarded her recognition. She can be reached at judy_madden@fc.mcps.k12.md.us or at the Guidance Unit, Montgomery County Public Schools, 850 Hungerford Drive, Rockville, MD 20850.

Chapter Six

Sharing Responsibility for Schoolwide Testing Programs: *No NGAs in Our Schools*

Judy Petersen
Granite School District, Salt Lake City, Utah

As the specialist for comprehensive guidance in Utah, I knew that statewide implementation of the comprehensive guidance program had arrived when a very competent, confident high school principal commented to me during an on-site peer evaluation of his school's guidance program. "Judy," he said, "I want you to know that the counselors are free from NGAs in this school." I searched through my intelligence database to attach a meaning to this acronym. NGA was one with which I had no familiarity. My perplexed expression prompted the counselors in the room to explain to me that the principal kept all *non-guidance activities* (NGAs) away from the counselors so they could focus on direct services to students. The satisfaction I felt in hearing both the comment and the explanation of NGAs reinforced the state-mandated strategy of training counselors and administrators together in planning, designing, and implementing a comprehensive approach to counseling and guidance. This principal had passed the training exam, and he spoke the comprehensive guidance language.

Utah Comprehensive Guidance Structure

Early in the program implementation process, specialists at the Utah State Office of Education adopted a training strategy for comprehensive guidance that requires school guidance teams to participate in state-sponsored training. The school guidance team includes counselors, guidance secretaries, key teachers, and most important, school administrators. I must admit that it was difficult to lure administrators from their schools to attend a statewide comprehensive guidance training session, but the mileage gained from this strategy, which is still in place

today, has had a significant effect in Utah. Administrators have learned to speak the language of the comprehensive guidance program and have been taught to recognize that the time counselors spend with students addressing the program components (guidance curriculum, individual planning, and responsive services) is of critical importance. With 12 consecutive years of program implementation, school counselors in Utah, and specifically in the Granite School District, are now diligently working toward comprehensive guidance program *enhancement* largely because state, district, and local school administrators have made it a high priority to move non-guidance activities away from school counselors.

District-Level Steering and Advisory Committees

School advisory and steering committees are defined as key components of the structural framework of the Utah Model for Comprehensive Counseling and Guidance (Utah State Board of Education, 1998). The advisory committee provides support and assists in establishing a direction and identifying goals for a school or district guidance program. The steering committee not only designs the methods of implementing and achieving the goals, but also provides on-site school/district management for the guidance program. Granite District guidance leaders have adhered to the structural framework outlined by the Utah model and have organized both district advisory and steering committees.

The district-level committees, which bring leadership, continuity, and consistency to the guidance program across the district, have been in place since the early years of program implementation. (The district guidance leaders include a student services director and two coordinators for secondary counseling and comprehensive guidance.) The district comprehensive guidance steering committee has been most productive in attending to displacing non-guidance activities and facilitating districtwide management of the comprehensive guidance program. The current membership structure of the steering committee includes the district student services director, district coordinators for counseling and guidance, and the comprehensive guidance chair (counselor) from each secondary school. The steering committee holds regular monthly meetings and is chaired by a district coordinator for secondary counseling and guidance.

Program Standards for Time Allocation

The traditional position orientation of school counseling, heavily laden with non-guidance activities, is far removed from the role established for counselors in a comprehensive guidance program, where time management is a key component. The paradigm shift that occurred in

Utah, from a "counselor position" to a "guidance program," led to statewide program consistency based on 12 program standards. The Utah Model for Comprehensive Counseling and Guidance (Utah State Board of Education, 1998) specifies that no less than 80% of counselors' time is to be spent providing direct services to 100% of the student population and limits indirect services to not more than 20% of their time. No time is allocated for non-guidance activities. The Utah model addresses the concept of *displacement*—i.e., replacing undesired or inappropriate activities or duties with desired guidance program activities—and suggests target time percentages in each of the guidance program components. In addition, the Comprehensive Guidance Program Standards require counselors to show evidence that the time allocations are being met through a master calendar, counselor daily log, or both. As a consequence of the specific time allocations for direct services, when new school duties emerge, the school counselor is not as likely as in years past to take on new (usually non-guidance) tasks.

Utah counselors are very fortunate that since 1993 the state legislature has appropriated funding for the comprehensive guidance program. Schools qualify to receive funding when they have met guidance program standards outlined by the Utah Model for Comprehensive Counseling and Guidance. Because this funding was available, early in the comprehensive guidance program implementation process in Granite School District, student services leaders made an innovative commitment to school counselors in an effort to eliminate non-guidance activities. The district agreed to hire a comprehensive guidance assistant (paraprofessional) for 30 hours a week in each secondary school once the guidance program had met the stringent program standards outlined in the Utah model. The guidance assistants' major duties are clerical tasks and other non-guidance activities previously done by counselors.

Counselors' Concern over New Accountability Measures

Over the past several years in Utah, the governor's office, the legislature, the State Board of Education, and the State Office of Education have been advocating, exploring, and working on strategies and means to install an effective accountability/assessment system to measure performance. The 2001 Utah State Legislature passed an act that establishes provisions related to such a system. The new accountability system, called the Utah Performance Assessment System for Students, or U-PASS, is intended to provide the public, the legislature, the state school board, school districts, schools, and teachers with evaluative information regarding students' levels of proficiency. The two key

elements of U-PASS are (a) tests and measurements and (b) publicly reported data. As U-PASS progressed from a proposal to reality, counselors in Granite School District (and other districts) were extremely concerned over the emphasis in the law on required schoolwide tests and measurements. U-PASS requires a norm-referenced achievement test in grades 3, 5, and 11 (typically the Stanford Achievement Test); Utah's core curriculum criterion-referenced tests in identified grades and subject areas; a new Basic Skills Competency Test (BSCT) in grade 10, passing which is required for high school graduation; a direct writing assessment in grades 6 and 9; and the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) to be administered in a random sample of schools.

Granite School District counseling and guidance leaders and school counselors foresaw "warning signs" of additional duties tied to testing as the details of accountability and assessment emerged. Counselors recognized that they could be the likely choice as the professional in the school who would manage schoolwide testing and accompanying responsibilities. School counseling and guidance professionals in Granite District and throughout Utah recognized and celebrated the progress they had made in moving from a position orientation to a comprehensive guidance program approach, and consequently were not likely to succumb to new schoolwide testing demands. It became very obvious that displacing non-guidance activities had to be attended to on a regular basis in order to maintain the progress made in comprehensive guidance program implementation.

The Process of Responding to the New Accountability Measures

Identifying and displacing non-guidance tasks involves a change process that is at the core of a comprehensive guidance program. The change process occurs at all levels of program development and management: planning, designing, implementing, evaluating, and enhancing. It is critical for counselors to recognize that the change process needs constant attention. To fully understand how Granite School District counselors attend to identifying and displacing non-guidance activities and maintaining a guidance program focus on an ongoing basis, recounting a brief story of a change process in progress is imperative. The events or timely circumstances leading to the displacement of existing and potential schoolwide testing responsibilities are worth sharing. It will become clear through the following narrative that continued guidance program success in this situation and others necessitates *leadership* at the state and local district levels, a *working* district steering committee, a *well-informed* school board, *trained* and *knowledgeable* district and school

administrators, and *dedicated* school counselors. Furthermore, an individual from among the aforementioned groups must emerge as the leader to manage the *work in progress* by coordinating all aspects of the change process.

In light of the impending accountability legislation, in January 2001 the state guidance specialists at the Utah State Office of Education sent a memorandum to all Utah school counselors, district student services directors, and district counseling supervisors and coordinators. The memo addressed concerns about the U-PASS legislation and specifically the grade 10 BSCT. The memo stated the position that "at most, the registration, administration, and tracking of BSCT are 'fair share' responsibilities of the professional school counselor and all of the educators in a building." The memo suggested that professionals in the school other than the counselor could assume these tasks. Moreover, the memo recommended that schools and districts look at "alternate approaches to illustrate how they could handle BSCT on a 'fair share' basis. Such an approach will help reduce professional school counselor involvement in non-guidance activities and ensure that counselors can maintain 80% of aggregate time on direct services to students."

Developing the Recommendation

The memo from the state office served as a catalyst for Granite District counseling and guidance leaders and school counselors to initiate a change process. They recognized an immediate need to be proactive in identifying and displacing any existing counselor duties associated with schoolwide testing in preparation for what could come. In February 2001, in the midst of the legislative session, the district comprehensive guidance steering committee met to discuss not only current issues and concerns connected to schoolwide testing, but also the possibility that counselors could be targeted as the professionals in the school to take on increased testing responsibilities under U-PASS. A very positive steering committee meeting ensued.

The district comprehensive guidance steering committee reached consensus on a recommendation that counselors immediately begin to identify and assess the amount of time currently spent on schoolwide testing duties and give attention to displacing as many of these duties as possible. The steering committee members agreed that a full-time guidance assistant (increased from 30 hours per week) could be a solution to the U-PASS schoolwide testing management dilemma. On returning to their schools, the counselors began a time and task analysis of their current schoolwide testing duties. The district student services director took the steering committee recommendation of a full-time guidance assistant to district administrators and advocated for keeping the

U-PASS schoolwide testing management responsibilities off the counselors' plate.

During the same time frame, as luck would have it, the Granite District school board and district-level administrators were in the process of developing long-range goals and objectives for the district for the next five years. The school board and district administrators engaged in a variety of events and activities as part of the strategic planning process, one of which was an electronic survey of 11th-grade students. The survey focused on an assortment of school issues and concerns. Concerning counseling and guidance, the surveyed students reported that having more time with their counselors and easier access to them was a high priority. Survey results, combined with the fact that schools are always in need of both personnel and programs to carry out interventions with students at risk, reinforced district support for safeguarding counselor time with students and moving the guidance assistant to full-time status.

A critical meeting involving the district student services director, district comprehensive guidance coordinators, and high school principals was held to discuss the feasibility of identifying an individual other than a counselor to manage schoolwide testing. The district student services director presented to the principals the steering committee recommendation that the guidance assistant be increased to full-time status and assume responsibility for schoolwide testing. The principals' response to the recommendation was mixed but generally supportive. The district student services director emerged as the leader in this change process. She also recognized the need to add a new dimension to principals' education about the comprehensive guidance program when one principal said she was not sure what counselors really did and another said he would continue to handle schoolwide testing his way. Although the principals had attended statewide training in the comprehensive guidance program, it seemed not all were remembering and practicing what they had learned.

The meeting with the high school principals established a forum for open communication about schoolwide testing and an opportunity to build and strengthen relationships necessary for future steps in the change process. Next came a discussion with key district administrators (assistant superintendents, the student services director, the research and assessment director, the applied technology education director, and others), out of which the steering committee recommendation was modified. The district administrators determined that it was cost prohibitive to increase the guidance assistants to full-time status. However, they agreed that identifying an individual other than the counselors to oversee schoolwide testing was important. They proposed that each secondary school would be allocated a set amount from comprehensive guidance funds to support a schoolwide testing manager. It was determined that the funds could be used to extend the hours of the school's comprehensive guidance assistant

or to provide a stipend to a department chair or other interested teacher (but not a counselor).

The change process continued with a new memo drafted jointly by the district student services director and the district research and assessment director and sent to all junior high and high school principals. It outlined the recommendation that school principals identify a manager for schoolwide testing (using aforementioned funding) as follows: "To keep in compliance with guidance program standards and for counselors to have sufficient time to provide direct services to students, we are recommending that school principals identify a manager for schoolwide testing other than a counselor." The memo also reinforced that "the use of testing data is very much a part of counseling students. Test administration is largely clerical and requires a great deal of time. It is our goal to move counselors away from the clerical tasks and thus have more time for students."

The secondary principals eventually needed more information and clarification about the new position of manager for schoolwide testing, and the district research and assessment director was ready to send out new school-year directives on testing. In the past, the schoolwide testing information had been channeled to "head counselors" or "testing counselors," bypassing the student services office, principals, and others. This time, however, the district research and assessment director made a positive effort to send directives about schoolwide testing to all of the key players, including principals, testing managers, and head counselors. These directives outlined again the rationale for moving the clerical and organizational responsibilities of schoolwide testing management away from the counselors. They also reinforced the allocation of comprehensive guidance funds for each school to cover the cost of a testing manager.

Unexpected Obstacles

It is significant to note that an initial obstacle the district guidance leaders faced in persuading schools to identify a test manager was the counselors. A week or so before school was scheduled to begin, the aforementioned district directives on a manager for schoolwide testing were presented by a district comprehensive counseling and guidance coordinator to all secondary counselors and guidance assistants at their opening institute. The information was new to some counselors and was met with mixed feelings (sometimes we are our own worst enemy), but most counselors applauded the new direction. Recognizing some of the counselors' frustrations in the discussion at the opening counselor meeting, the district counselors' association conducted a telephone poll of its elected officers and presented a position to the steering committee in support of a manager

for schoolwide testing.

However, once counselors and principals had an opportunity to discuss the new directives together, district student services leaders encountered interference. Some principals expressed concern that the district was trying to change their school's current practice of test administration rather than just the management piece. Other principals expressed that they felt left out of the planning and development phase of the change process and wished that they had been included more in the early discussion phase of the process.

It was necessary to dialogue with the counselors to pinpoint any frustrations and concerns. An emergency meeting of the district steering committee occurred a few days following the opening counselor institute. Counselors were given an opportunity to express their concerns, which covered a variety of issues. Some counselors expressed possessiveness over their current ties to testing, stating that they were the only individuals in the school who could manage schoolwide testing professionally or that others in the school might not be as competent or capable of managing testing. Other counselors expressed concern over funding connected to the new position; they felt uncomfortable with putting a price tag on the testing duty, given that the district had not paid counselors for the task in the past.

Back on Track: Lessons Learned

It can be officially reported that each secondary school in Granite School District has been allocated funds to support a non-counselor manager for schoolwide testing. It is critical to recognize that identifying and displacing non-guidance activities connected to this whole issue of schoolwide testing is indeed a work in progress. Overall, the lessons learned in this particular initiative far outweigh any obstacles. As previously indicated, the majority of the counselors clearly supported the move to a manager for schoolwide testing. They could foresee that the testing and assessment requirements of U-PASS could create major barriers (non-guidance duties) to full implementation of a comprehensive guidance program if responsibility for testing were directed toward them. The district student services director gave leadership to the change process and facilitated districtwide discussion of the issue at hand. It was reiterated repeatedly that the desired outcome was more counselor time devoted to direct services to students. Keeping the students foremost in their minds gave counselors motivation to work through difficulties in the transition period. Ultimately, having a manager for schoolwide testing can enhance all aspects of the schools' comprehensive guidance programs and will help to clarify an *appropriate,* fair-share role for counselors in light of the required tests and measurements of U-PASS.

Furthermore, both counselors and principals agree that the interpretation of testing data is still very much an important role the counselor plays in direct services to students, specifically in individual planning and responsive services.

All of the key players in the change process have since made recommendations to the district to ensure the position of a manager of schoolwide testing. The district leaders have recommended that counselors should not relinquish involvement in schoolwide testing completely, but that they should participate as team members with teachers in the test administration process required by U-PASS. The principals value their counselors' expertise and leadership, and have requested that the counselors who have been responsible for some testing duties in past years work in concert with the new test managers in this transitional year. Finally, counselors and principals strongly recommended that the district research and assessment director develop a manual for test managers and conduct districtwide training.

Fundamental Insights

Identifying key players is critical in any change process. State office leaders, district-level administrators, student services and counseling and guidance leaders, the district research and assessment director, local school board members, principals, school counselors, guidance assistants, and others contributed to initiating the change process, and they will continue to be involved in the implementation phase. Successfully identifying and displacing non-guidance activities in the comprehensive guidance program is dependent not only upon identifying the key players, but also upon establishing good communication and building positive relationships with those involved in and influenced by the proposed change. It is also critical to recognize that schools are part of a larger system, and making a change will likely affect other parts of the system. Key guidance leaders at the state, district, and local school levels must not overlook the importance of giving unrelenting attention to the process of identifying and displacing non-guidance activities. In the words of Michael Fullan (2001, p. 32), "Change, whether desired or not, represents a serious personal and collective experience characterized by ambivalence and uncertainty; and if the change works out, it can result in a sense of mastery, accomplishment, and professional growth."

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About the Author

Judy Petersen is currently coordinator for secondary comprehensive counseling and guidance for the Granite School District, Salt Lake City, Utah. Prior to her current position, she was for five years the state specialist for guidance and career development at the Utah State Office of Education (USOE). She, along with Dr. Lynn Jensen (former USOE student services director), led the statewide development, funding, and implementation of the Utah Model for Comprehensive Counseling and Guidance. Among her state and national leadership positions, she served a three-year term as guidance division vice president and member of the board of directors of the Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE). She can be reached at judy.petersen@granite.k12.ut.us.

Part 4
Critical Issues in Parent Involvement

Involving and Responding to Parents: *Opportunities and Challenges*

Bali Cuthbert
Dorchester School District Two
Summerville, South Carolina

A Variety of Parent Involvement Strategies: *Enhancing Program Delivery through Productive Relationships*

Carolyn Price
Berkeley County School District
Moncks Corner, South Carolina

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Parent Involvement

Parents may be involved in comprehensive guidance programs in a variety of ways. They may serve as resources to or in the program, or they may be supporters or critics of the program. Parents who are resources to the program may provide input to the program design and implementation through participation on the guidance advisory committee or in reviewing curriculum materials. They may be advocates for the program with policymakers. They may also work as volunteers in augmenting program activities, for example assisting with career guidance activities or doing paperwork and other logistical tasks. They may be program clients or participants through being involved with their children's career and educational planning, or through consultations when their children are having difficulty in school.

Some parents are dissatisfied with the quantity or quality of the guidance and counseling provided to their children. Many of these parents want more attention paid to their children than the school guidance counselors can afford to give. Some of these parents want individual, intense, or long-term therapy for their children. Others want one-on-one guidance as their children take each step toward an educational or career goal. There are also those who disagree with the goals and content of the program, who for political or religious reasons do not believe guidance and counseling are integral to the mission of schools. The latter may exercise their rights by opting their children out of program activities.

When a comprehensive guidance program has been developed with parents' input and participation, the program is more likely to be valuable to them. When parents participate by invitation or by volunteering, the program is enhanced. When needed, they advocate on behalf of the program. When a sufficient number of parents are not satisfied with the services their children receive, their complaints can cause administrative interventions into the program that may impair the integrity of the program's purpose or design. When parents who do not believe in the program's objectives or content establish political influence, they can cause the redirection or even elimination of the program in the school.

Chapter Seven

Involving and Responding to Parents: *Opportunities and Challenges*

Bali Cuthbert
Dorchester School District Two, Summerville, South Carolina

Ten years ago, school counselors in Dorchester School District Two wrote a district comprehensive guidance program designed to address proactively the needs of students, parents, and school staff. After carefully studying the comprehensive guidance program model and determining that its components and organizational structure best represented their needs and the goals they wanted to pursue, counselors decided to pattern the district program after it. School counselors worked diligently to establish themselves as leaders of a counseling program, rather than as individuals holding a position. As with most educational reforms, changing the behaviors and perceptions of individuals was not easy. The paradigm shift from a counseling position to a counseling program was embraced by many of the counselors, feared by some, and ignored by others. In 1999, South Carolina adopted a statewide comprehensive guidance program, also based on the comprehensive guidance program model. Because the Dorchester School District comprehensive model was very similar to the new state model, counselors were able to devote their time to refining and aligning their program to state and national guidance standards, rather than having to develop a new district model to meet the state mandate.

Standards-Based Education

Education in our nation continues to be scrutinized, and public demand for accountability is driving educational reform. Never before has education been in such a state of flux as it is today. New programs and initiatives are introduced daily and acclaimed as the panacea for the problems educators face. Most of these new programs are not given

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enough time to work; in many cases, they are removed after only one or two years, before being fully implemented. Teachers, counselors, administrators, school boards, and parents must work collaboratively to implement sound educational practices and strategies. Only then will public education survive the close scrutiny, high stakes testing, and standards-based initiatives being implemented nationwide.

The national focus on standards-based education produces challenges for school counselors and their efforts to support the social and emotional development of children. High stakes testing has created a different environment in schools, one that is not necessarily nurturing or supportive of affective education. School counselors must meet national and state counseling standards. However, because these standards and competencies are not found on any state or national tests used to measure student achievement, many educators view these standards as peripheral or nonessential. In essence, these standards are addressed if there is time to manipulate the school day to find time to teach them. School counselors find themselves bargaining for time with teachers and administrators in order to provide classroom guidance, small-group counseling, and individual counseling.

One positive effect that the standards-based education movement is bringing is the involvement of parents in the educational plans of their children. Parents are being encouraged to participate in school-based task forces, parent conferences, and planning sessions related to their child's academic performance. A shared vision and strong working relationship between parents and school personnel will result in better services being provided for students. School counselors must make a concerted effort to be included in opportunities to educate parents about the counseling program and counseling services they provide. Parents must be made aware of the fact that the emotional health of their child is directly related to that child's academic achievement and success in school. When parents understand the important relationship between emotional health and academic success, and become knowledgeable about the school counseling program, they will join with counselors in demanding that schools give the appropriate time to affective education.

Parent Participation in Program Design

School counselors agree that parent involvement is essential for counseling programs to be successful. Research shows that parents are the most influential people in the life of a child. Peer pressure, which parents often believe has more influence on their child's behavior, has been shown to rank behind a parent's influence. Parents know their child's needs, and it is important for them to be able to share this information

with school counselors. Many times, parents can provide information about their and their child's previous involvement in programs in other educational systems.

Involving parents in designing a school counseling program promotes insight into parents' expectations regarding their child's well-being. Parent involvement also increases the chance that skills taught in the guidance curriculum will be reinforced at home. Successful social skills education is dependent upon the school counselor and the parent working together. Permanent, systemic change cannot occur without this collaborative effort. Parents who are involved in designing a school counseling program become knowledgeable about the goals of the program. This knowledge promotes a sense of ownership in the program and increases the likelihood that parents will support the goals established. Parent involvement enhances the opportunity for open dialogue between parents and counselors; respect for the counselors and trust in the counseling program often follow. The ultimate goal of parent involvement in a school counseling program is to empower parents to be an integral part of their child's education.

Although parent involvement is essential for promoting support for and understanding about school counseling programs, it is not always easy to involve parents. Counselors must strive to find creative and effective strategies to encourage parent participation. One effective strategy used by Dorchester School District counselors is the practice of conducting an annual needs assessment to determine the needs of the students in their schools. Surveys are distributed to students, parents, faculty, and staff at the beginning of each school year. The needs assessment provides information about the expectations of the respondents and is used for making changes to the current program and designing new initiatives to meet the needs of both students and parents. Depending on the information received, changes might involve providing more individual counseling and fewer small-group counseling sessions, or providing more classroom guidance and less individual counseling. Our counselors are cognizant that the counseling programs of yesterday do not necessarily meet the needs of today's students.

Parent Participation in Guidance Program Activities

Effective communication is another essential strategy that counselors regularly use to keep parents informed and involved. The key to effective communication is to remember to communicate often and in a manner easily understood by parents. Parent-teacher conferences provide unparalleled opportunities for counselors to gain perspective about a child's home environment. [Nesselhuf (1998).] Involving the child in a

parent-teacher conference can be an effective communication strategy, but the age and emotional well-being of the child must always be considered. This strategy may not be appropriate for children in elementary schools. Open communication is enhanced when parents are afforded easy access to school counselors. Having an open door policy encourages parents to seek information during times that fit their schedules. A friendly atmosphere conveys a "nothing to hide" message and promotes trust.

Time and schedules are issues for parents and school counselors alike. There are two strategies that school counselors can use to address the range of parent work schedules. The first is to adapt time-intensive programs or workshops to more parent-friendly time frames. For example, a workshop that normally is conducted in one-hour sessions for eight weeks can be scheduled for four weeks if parents agree to participate for two-hour blocks. Counselors report a better attendance and participation rate for programs that take fewer weeks. The second strategy that addresses time issues is to vary the times when programs are offered. Parent nights meet the needs of most parents, but parents who work a swing shift are better served by morning programs. Parents appreciate the effort school counselors make to accommodate their work schedules. Making these small changes in scheduling programs and parent conferences demonstrates a respect for the life situations of parents.

Negativism and rumors often work to sabotage a new program. Parents who are knowledgeable about the school counseling program and the initiatives of the counseling department often may serve as ambassadors for school counselors. To promote understanding, parents may be invited to serve on advisory committees, such as health, drug, and violence prevention; school-to-work; and grade-to-grade transition committees. As parents become more familiar with the goals of the program, they can provide valuable information about formats and content that would best meet their needs. The more often parents are in the school, the more willing they are to share their positive comments as well as their concerns.

Parents may also be asked to help with specific tasks at various times during the year. For example, parents can serve as test monitors, staff registration tables, and perform other tasks on an as-needed basis. Counselors are encouraged to use parent volunteers as often as possible for tasks that do not require master's-level training or involve confidentiality issues. Thoughtful planning can ensure many important volunteer opportunities that do not violate confidentiality concerns.

Career fairs and career programs provide excellent opportunities for parents to be involved in school counseling activities. Career programs are

usually one-time activities that fit in nicely with a parent's work schedule. Most parents are excited about spending a few hours talking about their chosen career, and most children enjoy having their parents visit their classrooms. One particularly successful career workshop at a local high school involved parents and alumni from the high school who conducted 30-minute workshops about their occupations. The students enjoyed hearing from former students who had sat in the same classrooms they were now occupying. The success of this program was evident from the positive comments made by the community and the students.

Parents appreciate having opportunities to experience the same educational opportunities their children experience. School counselors can provide opportunities for parents to use the same career computer software their children use. For example, parents can be invited to work on computers in computer labs to research new job opportunities, complete career assessments, and research job outlooks. Students can serve as facilitators for these workshops and can be paired with their parents.

Character education lessons and social skills training provide excellent opportunities for parents to be involved in the school counseling program. Parents can receive training from the counselor in small groups and then be assigned to classrooms to teach the lessons to the students. Parent volunteers often facilitate special clubs, such as the Just Say No Club or the Character Education Club. In our district, we have "Just Say No Moms" and "Do Dads" to help with other special projects. Parents enjoy the opportunity to work on altruistic projects and to interact in positive ways with the students.

Parent involvement is more easily attained for programs that focus on academic information. Grade-transition meetings involving fifth-grade students and their parents and eighth-grade students and their parents typically have wonderful attendance. At these meetings, parents receive information about their child's new school, take tours of the new school facility, meet key personnel, and learn about the curriculum their child will pursue. Other information, such as explanations about statewide testing programs, helpful test-taking tips, extracurricular activities, and website information, is distributed in parent packets. At the high school level, college planning nights and evening meetings pertaining to student course registration for the following year usually have good parent involvement. At these meetings, school counselors provide information about the high school experience and emphasize requirements necessary for moving on to postsecondary education opportunities. All students are encouraged to attend the college planning meeting every year, as each meeting brings new information, challenges, and requirements.

School Counselors' Responsibilities

School counselors must be diligent in providing positive experiences for parents who are involved in a school counseling program. Determining the level of commitment from parents before a project is started is essential, as is adequate training for parents involved in teaching lessons. Some parents prefer to work behind the scenes rather than in the limelight. Many parents who cannot be involved during regular school hours are willing to make phone calls, cut out pictures, or provide items they can purchase and send to school. Some parents prefer to work as partners with other parents and are willing to team-teach lessons. In all situations, teachers need to remain in their classrooms when parents are providing instruction to serve as disciplinarians and resources for the parents when necessary.

Despite the best efforts of a school counselor, there are times when strategies and programs designed to involve parents fail to produce the desired outcomes. Reasons for the failure of these strategies might include (a) unrealistic time commitment expectations, (b) trying to communicate too much information to too many parents at one time, or (c) insufficient attention given to organization. Several years ago, one high school initiated a career portfolio–signing evening for parents. Parents were encouraged to sign up for appointments to view their child's career portfolio and talk with counselors about their child's course requests for the next year. Most parents did not take advantage of this opportunity, however, which resulted in school personnel spending the evening working on other projects.

Lessons can be learned from failed attempts to involve parents as well as successful ones. It is always important to have an alternate plan when parent volunteers are involved. Occasionally, too many volunteers arrive and counselors need to have something else planned for them to do. It is never a good idea to send a volunteer home because there is nothing to do, as it will be difficult to recruit the person to come again. On the other hand, sometimes volunteers fail to show up, and a plan needs to be in place for that contingency as well.

Teachers can be a school counselor's most important ally when programs are being implemented. For that reason, it is important to ask for the teacher's input, to fully explain the goals of the program, and to let the teacher know the role he or she needs to play to make the program a success. When parents are going to be working in a teacher's classroom, counselors need to make sure the teacher meets the parent. One important thing to remember is that if the teacher is not happy, no one is happy.

Responding to Parents Who Oppose the Program

The very nature of affective education presents the possibility that some individuals or groups will oppose programs that are initiated in the school. School counselors will be called upon to use all of their counseling skills and techniques to handle these critical constituents. Using current needs assessment results is one way to address the concerns of critical constituents. It is difficult to argue with offering programs that parents, students, and faculty members have identified as important through a valid needs assessment. Likewise, programs that have documented positive evaluations are more easily defended than those without any evaluation to substantiate their effectiveness.

Parents who disagree with a particular program should be encouraged to review the curriculum and resources that are available. The school counselor should listen with respect to the parent's concerns. Every effort should be made to address concerns about cultural diversity. Sharing facts about the program in question, explaining the goals and objectives of the program, maintaining professionalism, and refraining from becoming defensive are techniques that may cause parents to change their minds about a program or initiative. Disagreements about curricular offerings should be viewed as a vehicle for improving the counseling program and an opportunity for counselors to review and re-evaluate initiatives. If a compromise is possible without jeopardizing the integrity of a program, the counselor might consider making the accommodations sought by the parent. Parents should be invited to write a letter expressing their concerns about a guidance program, and if a compromise cannot be reached, the parent should be allowed to remove his or her child from the program.

Benefits Outweigh Problems

The benefits of involving parents and community members in the school counseling program outweigh the problems that sometimes occur. Counselors need to trust the process of involving parents. Involving parents takes a great deal of time and effort, but the benefits are long-lasting and sometimes permanent. Here is specific advice for counselors who are working to improve parent involvement:

1. When you ask for parents' input and ideas, use them.
2. Get to know who the regular school volunteers are and solicit their help in the guidance program.
3. Be organized and ready when volunteers arrive because chaos is easily

recognized and impossible to hide.

4. Hours spent training parent volunteers can greatly reduce the number and magnitude of problems that might occur down the line.
5. Always follow up with a personal thank-you note when parents have given their time to help with a project.

The most important thing to remember is that what is best for students is what should be done, not what is best for personnel. Students' needs always take priority. School counselors who empower parents to be involved in their child's education are ultimately empowering the children they serve. Empowered children are emotionally and socially healthy. They make wise decisions, act responsibly, and become productive citizens. That is the ultimate goal of all school counseling programs.

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About the Author

Beverly "Bali" Cuthbert has been a guidance specialist in Dorchester School District Two, Summerville, South Carolina, for three years. Previously, she was a guidance program specialist in the same district. In addition, she has worked as a high school counselor and social studies teacher, and as an intermediate and junior high school teacher. She is active in the South Carolina School Counselors Association and is a leader in her community as well, having served on the Dorchester County Alcohol and Drug Commission for ten years and as chairwoman of the board of directors for STARS (Summerville Takes a Responsible Stand) for 11 years. She can be reached at bcuthbert@dorchester2.k12.sc.us.

Chapter Eight

A Variety of Parent Involvement Strategies: *Enhancing Program Delivery through Productive Relationships*

Carolyn Price
Berkeley County School District, Moncks Corner, South Carolina

As members of the support staff in a school, much of what counselors do to promote student achievement requires parent involvement. Parent involvement may be on an individual basis, as occurs when working directly with a parent to correct an identified student need, which may be academic, social, or behavioral. Counselors' work is based primarily upon the needs of children and the promotion of healthy minds and lifestyles. Parents' insight and involvement is most beneficial in the area of problem solving, as is their willingness to participate in team initiatives to achieve educational goals on behalf of their child.

Parents Vary

Many parents feel they have entrusted the education of their child entirely to schools, and they want to assume little or no responsibility for their child's education. I fully recognize the parent as the child's first teacher, but the truth of the matter is that not all children enter our schools ready to learn. There are no criteria for parenthood, no litmus test that one has to pass to become eligible, so children vary greatly in their experiences before they enter school.

Recognizing that children enter the world symbolically as a blank page, their experience script and the color and shape of their vision and desire for continued learning influence what they learn. Public education in particular is entrusted with the responsibility of educating students from many and varied psychosocial, cultural, and economic backgrounds. Although students have a certain degree of shared experiences, they also have experiences that are not

shared. These nonshared experiences are based upon economic and family factors that cultivate an appreciation for lifelong learning. Children reared in homes where parents exhibit a thirst and appreciation for education tend to acquire a similar attitude. For the most part these homes are equipped with books, newspapers, magazines, computers, and so on. These families' lifestyle includes vacations, recreation, hobbies, theater, and the arts.

As one can see, the playing field is not level from the beginning. Therefore, it is not surprising that when readiness tests are administered to preschoolers, some will test not ready for first grade. From the onset of their public education experience, some students find themselves in a catch-up mode. It then becomes the role of student support services to develop strategies to enhance academic achievement and success for these students.

Strategy 1: A Comprehensive Guidance Program

The first student support strategy is to adopt a comprehensive model of guidance program delivery in grades K to 12. Such a model promotes and allows for accountability and evaluation of personnel as well as district-adopted programs. Emphasis should be placed upon the implementation of programs with proven efficacy. In Berkeley County the guidance program includes these components:

- Social skills development
- Violence prevention
- Peer mediation
- Communication skills
- Decision-making skills
- Cooperative learning
- Substance abuse prevention
- Goal setting
- Parenting
- Coordination with and referrals to community agencies
- Sexual harassment prevention
- Cultural diversity training
- School career preparation
- College exploration
- Mentoring
- Advocacy
- Behavioral assessment

Although the counselors are not directly responsible for all of the aforementioned, they do function as the first line of defense. As

gatekeepers, counselors seek to ensure that no child is left behind educationally.

Many efforts are made to create a social support network to bolster students' social and emotional success. Because many of our students remain in this area, we establish linkages with many former students. They are invited back to our schools as mentors, guest speakers, speakers for Career Day, school committee members, and other roles.

In another network, the guidance director for the county serves on a multiagency, collaborative committee formed to provide a comprehensive action program to help missing and exploited children. This action program, called M/CAP, affords all schools the opportunity to seek support for students from available agencies. The guidance director for the county also serves on the Moncks Corner Mayor's Committee, which recognizes the achievements of students with disabilities thorough awards and scholarships. The counselors at each school also work to support new students through a buddy system.

Strategy 2: Lower Counselor-to-Student Ratios

> In our efforts to be all that we can be, counselors are being pulled in too many directions. In many cases we are becoming far removed from the work we have been professionally trained and prepared to do. Paperwork has become our foe to the point where documentation requires more effort than the performance and completion of the services we provide. We are unable to function efficiently without mandated registrars or clerical support personnel.

There is a direct correlation between counselor-student ratio and the effectiveness of a comprehensive guidance program. In South Carolina, counselors battled to get the ratio reduced to one counselor per 500 students. As members of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, South Carolina schools follow the guidelines provided by this association, which include a counselor-student ratio of 1:500. Given the number of clerical and administrative duties that counselors routinely do, the 1:500 ratio is too great. The counselors in South Carolina logged many conversations with the state superintendent of education regarding this issue. In 2000, the state superintendent earmarked Excellence in Middle Schools funding to hire additional nurses, guidance counselors, or school resource officers. For the past two years, Berkeley County has used this funding to hire additional guidance counselors in eight of our ten middle schools.

This mandate has resulted in improved student services. [Radd (1998).] Guidance counselors are not afforded the luxury of working in plush offices devoid of interruptions only with voluntary clients having scheduled

appointments. Instead every day is an adventure, and all children and families who show up must be dealt with in a caring and timely fashion. The state superintendent continues to work with the legislature to lower the ratio.

Strategy 3: Counselors as Problem Solvers and Communicators

> When counselors and parents differ in their goals and visions for a student's achievement, counselors may face personal criticism. When facing criticism, counselors may need to utilize mediation or conflict resolution skills to avoid an impasse. Addressing a problem at the lowest possible level goes a long way in deflating anger before the situation escalates. During the course of any given day, counselors must use basic human relations skills in their dealings with students, parents, administrators, and teachers. When their efforts work smoothly, as they often do, counselors receive little recognition of the vital services they routinely provide.

As counselors we value parent involvement. Any involvement by parents indicates that they are focused upon the needs and the welfare of their children. The most difficult group of parents to reach are the ones who appear to be indifferent. This indifference is shown by not attending PTA meetings, scheduled open houses, or scheduled parent-teacher conferences; not sending back signed papers; not returning phone calls; vacationing during the school session; and the like. These are a few of the concerns I hear from counselors. At the same time, however, counselors are also sensitive to the "why" of this seeming indifference.

Some parents' efforts may appear to be misguided or based upon misinformation or limited information. In such cases, an open dialogue between the parents and the counselor can go a long way in remedying the situation. While recognizing differences in perceptions, attitudes, cultures, and socioeconomic levels, counselors strive to formulate a professional working relationship with parents and significant others in order to engage in mutual goal setting to meet the needs of students. The multicultural training counselors are now receiving helps them promote effective communication by better understanding cultural differences and reaching out to parents on their own ground. Berkeley County has parent centers located in several schools, where parents can receive education in child development, the workings of the educational system, the availability of further adult training, and so on.

We make no efforts to contain parents by denying them access to public information. Like any citizen, they have the right to address the local school board. We afford our parents the opportunity to serve as volunteers at the school level as room mothers/fathers; media center aides; sponsors for extracurricular

activities; members of the PTA, School Improvement Council, or Strategic Planning Committee; and in other roles. At the district level, parents are involved in strategic planning initiatives, the school board, the Health Advisory Committee, the Safe and Drug Free Schools Committee, the Prevention Board, and the Oversight Committee for School Construction, among others.

Strategy 4: Guidance Leadership

> Counselors are great mediators, moderators, facilitators, and taskmasters. The very presence of school counselors allows for the smooth delivery of educational services. We are recognized as teachers, and in many cases we begin our careers among the ranks of teachers. South Carolina public schools follow the South Carolina comprehensive developmental guidance and counseling program model, which is based upon the comprehensive guidance program model. The model serves to ensure accountability and provides the basis for the delivery of guidance services. Knowledge of this curriculum model provides the framework for peer support, supervision, and evaluation.

We are aware that the delivery of complete guidance services requires competent leadership via a guidance director or principal, competent district leadership via a district director or coordinator of guidance services or superintendent, and statewide leadership via a director of state guidance services. There is a direct correlation between the presence of qualified and trained guidance personnel at every level and the effective provision of services. Often counselors devote so much time to taking care of others, including teaching staff and administrators, that they do not have adequate time to take care of themselves. It is vital that all counselors engage in advocacy on their own behalf and that of their profession. We take pride in the students we have touched, shaped, and helped to transform into productive citizens.

About the Author

Carolyn Price has served for six years as director of guidance and counseling services for the Berkeley County School District, Moncks Corner, South Carolina. Prior to holding this administrative position, she was a high school counselor, a counselor for teens with substance abuse problems, and a high school science and physical education teacher. She has also been a college faculty member and an active member of the Trident Technical College Board of Trustees. In writing the school district's experience, she was assisted by Shirley Ford, at-risk coordinator. Carolyn can be reached at CarolynPrice@berkeley.k12.sc.us or at P.O. Box 465, Pinopolis, SC 29469.

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Chapter Nine

Seizing Opportunities: *Advocating for the Development of a Comprehensive Guidance Program*

Hilda Lopez
Ysleta Independent School District, El Paso, Texas

As I maneuver my way down the grocery aisles, I spot a campus principal doing some late grocery shopping as well. After we exchange greetings, the principal shares concerns about a counselor assigned to the school where I work as a counselor. After listening to the tirade of complaints, I tell the principal that the counselor is doing the best job possible under the worst of circumstances. If the district had a guidance director, I explain, these problems would not exist. This simple conversation held five years ago in the aisle of a grocery store fueled my passion to advocate for the comprehensive guidance program we are developing today.

The Ysleta Independent School District in El Paso is located in far west Texas and is a stone's throw from the Mexican border. The student population totals 47,999; the ethnic breakdown is 87% Hispanic, 9.1% White, and 2% African American; 74% of the total population is considered economically disadvantaged. Academically, the district has earned boasting rights by being named as the only large urban recognized school district in the state of Texas where 75% of students graduate under the Texas Recommended Plan, which is considered the college preparatory pathway.

A Roller Coaster History

Although Ysleta ISD is rich in history and academic achievement, the counseling program has not enjoyed the same level of success. The guidance program has seen many changes over a span of 20 years, with "roller coaster" results. In the early 1980s, the middle schools and high schools employed school counselors, but the elementary campuses received specialized counseling services only through special education and compensatory education programs. In 1985, the district hired its

first coordinator of guidance and counseling and assigned one counselor to every two elementary schools. Through this process, the special education and Title I counselors became "generic" counselors who now served all students. Within two years, a counselor had been assigned to every elementary school, with the middle and high schools retaining their counseling staff as well. This was the era when the largest elementary school in the district hired two counselors, which was a milestone for counselors. This was also the era when the district enjoyed relatively plentiful resources.

As the political and administrative structure changed, the amount of money spent on counselors was scrutinized with the question, "What are we getting for the millions spent on counselors?" Given that the dropout rate was especially high and test scores were low, the value of counselors was called into question. In 1994, the district dissolved the Guidance and Counseling Department and formally eliminated the position of coordinator of guidance and counseling. During these six years, supervising counselors became a secondary responsibility of different department directors.

In 1995, the district made an attempt to develop a comprehensive guidance program by hiring a consultant and assembling a task force to write a district comprehensive guidance and counseling plan. Upon completion, the plan was formally presented to the school board and all district counselors. After the initial presentation to counselors, however, the plan was never mentioned again. This was also the last time all counselors met as a unit for a span of five years. The wonderful work of the task force went on the shelf in many schools, never to be referred to again.

Lesson learned: Advocacy begins with the leadership at the district level. Unless the momentum toward change is supported, it will not be sustained.

The consequences of a lack of advocacy on behalf of the comprehensive guidance program were profound. A lack of vision, focus, training, and follow-up devastated a once-thriving program. Campus administrators began asking whether they were required to have counselors in their buildings, and they were told they were not. The era of site-based decision making gave principals complete autonomy over the budget, programs, and staff. The impact was felt first at the elementary level, where elementary counselors were replaced by school social workers at some campuses. Two high schools adopted the dean concept, which meant that counselors and assistant principals were assigned similar duties that included guidance, discipline, and other administrative tasks. Staff development from the district office was nonexistent, program

implementation inconsistent, and morale amongst the counseling staff at an all-time low. Counselors felt it was just a matter of time before their positions became extinct in the district.

Renewed Support

Advocacy on behalf of a comprehensive guidance program was resurrected when a new superintendent was hired to lead the district. When the school board, superintendent, and district leaders met to develop the district goals, one goal adopted was, "The district will provide effective and accountable early childhood to postsecondary guidance, counseling, student advocacy, and support services." The first objective under this goal was to hire a director of guidance, counseling, and student advocacy services as the first step toward creating a department specifically for guidance and counseling at the district level. Advocacy from within the system took on a profound meaning and responsibility.

The significance of program history cannot be overemphasized. When the question surfaced, "Why do we need a comprehensive guidance and counseling program?" past history helped us see that the results did not support keeping the traditional program.

Lesson learned: It is important to know where you have been in order to advocate for a new vision of where you want to be.

Advocacy from within the Counseling Ranks

Advocating for the development of a comprehensive guidance program began with the new director spending a full day at every high school during the first month on the job. This gave counselors an opportunity to advocate for their program, cite problems and concerns, and showcase what they had accomplished. It also provided the director with an informal assessment of the program at each campus. A meeting was also held with elementary counselors to gather similar information. Salary concerns, days on duty, and the high number of non-guidance duties were concerns shared by many of the counselors.

Lesson learned: Spending a full day at every high school campus was critical to providing whole-group and individualized attention. Spending equal time with middle school and elementary school counselors would have given the director insight on attitudes and perceptions from this important group. Do not sacrifice the time needed to develop relationships and gather information, for

these are the seeds of advocacy.

Advocating for the development of a comprehensive guidance program continued with the assembly of a task force composed of a counselor from every high school, one middle school and one elementary school counselor from every feeder area, a high school student and recent graduate, parents, community members, and principals. This advisory committee provided information that was used as an informal needs assessment, shared perceptions, developed goals and formulated program recommendations. We knew it was naive to think that all counselors would recognize the many benefits of a comprehensive guidance program. Therefore, to emphasize the need for change, the task force was given information on how students' lives had changed in the areas of academics, personal-social, and career development while the guidance program had remained unchanged. The students' and parents' voices on the task force were also very powerful. When students said, "The counseling center at the school I attended was very cold and impersonal," they helped to set the stage for change. The task force also needed training on the elements of a comprehensive guidance program. We read, researched, and made site visits to counseling programs in Northside ISD in San Antonio and Omaha Public Schools in Omaha, Nebraska, to see firsthand what such a program looked like.

Lesson learned: Site visits are a very effective and powerful tool to use when considering change, for they allow one to personally experience the "finished product."

When the counselors returned and reported on their visits, they were highly impressed with the comprehensive guidance programs in other districts. It was important for us to remember that those districts had once embarked on a journey of change similar to ours, and they too had experienced similar doubts and fears.

We had many heated conversations about the realities counselors faced in the district and how they affected the implementation of a comprehensive guidance program. The process of developing a comprehensive guidance program cannot be hurried. All the doubts, questions, and issues that all the consumers have relating to the program must be dealt with, or the efforts may be sabotaged.

Lesson learned: Advocacy may take the shape of buying time to develop your program. Don't scrimp on time!

When the draft of the comprehensive developmental guidance and

counseling plan was completed, counselors on the task force presented the plan to other counselors and solicited input. Although some counselors were ready to embrace the concept, many were threatened by the plan and signed a petition stating that they did not want to change the counseling program or the method of counselor evaluation. The bulk of the resistance came from middle school counselors, who aggressively petitioned their colleagues to join them against this "unrealistic" plan. Of the 90 counselors, 54 signed the petition and sent it to the superintendent.

Lesson learned: Sometimes advocacy is driven by a token few, and it may not be in the direction you intended. Do not underestimate the power of apprehension and resistance, for they can take on a life of their own.

Advocating for a comprehensive guidance program can be a lonely and trying experience, but this is a journey that many others in the guidance field have experienced. Do not go on this journey alone but rather consult with colleagues who will offer guidance, an ear, or words of comfort.

Advocacy with District and Campus Administrative Staff

During the spring session, Texas state legislators considered several bills relating to guidance and counseling. As I received legislative updates from the Texas Counseling Association, I forwarded the information to all the counselors. One bill mandates that if a school has a counselor, the counselor will deliver a comprehensive guidance program. One counselor faithfully shared these updates with her principal. In a casual conversation I had with this principal, the person exclaimed, "My counselor keeps sending me a copy of those legislative bills you send them. I don't know why. She doesn't have any administrative duties, I don't assign lunch duty to her." Although the counselor did not have lunch duty, she was responsible for all special education referrals, Section 504, the gifted and talented program, games on Saturday, and other duties. It is important to recognize that this principal was sincere and did not have a concept of what appropriate guidance duties were. Many times we counselors pit ourselves against administrators, but we do nothing to educate them about a comprehensive guidance program and the role of the counselor in it.

Lesson learned: The decisions campus administrators make are based on their perspective as to what is in the best interest of the students. It is the responsibility of the Guidance Department and counselors to educate administrators by

demonstrating the structure of a comprehensive guidance program and how students benefit because of it.

When I presented the comprehensive guidance plan to district and campus administrators, the feedback was extremely positive. The challenge now is determining how and to whom we can reassign all the duties that historically belonged to counselors in an era where resources are extremely limited. Some principals are extremely creative in this regard, and the next piece of advocacy will be to have principals share what they have done to help eliminate their counselors' non-guidance duties.

Advocacy with Teachers

The strongest component of the comprehensive guidance program involves the counselor engaging students in guidance lessons and involving faculty and staff so that the program is embraced by everyone, not just the counselor. Counselors have voiced concerns regarding teachers being reluctant to allocate class time for guidance during an era of high stakes testing when class time is coveted for academic instruction. Counselors are the strongest advocates in this regard, and the director's responsibility is to teach counselors how to advocate on their own behalf. The counselors at one high school presented their counseling program to the faculty and staff in January and received such a positive response that teachers have volunteered to help with the guidance lessons and some student support groups. (They have received training to do so.) The district office can also help counselors advocate for the program by completing a cross-comparison between guidance standards and academic standards. When teachers see the correlation between the two, giving up class time becomes a non-issue.

Lesson learned: Counselors are powerful advocates for the comprehensive guidance program, but they must be provided with training and the tools they need to forge forward on their own campuses.

Advocacy with Students and Parents

One of the first guidance presentations an elementary school counselor makes is "What Is a School Counselor?" Through this simple guidance lesson, students learn about the role of the counselor, how to access responsive services, how the counselor involves others to help a student, and what guidance lessons are like. As students move from elementary to middle school and then to high school, they are no longer offered

lessons such as this. This leaves them confused about guidance and counseling at the secondary level and the scope of services offered through the counseling center.

Students and parents must understand what a comprehensive guidance program is and what they can expect from it. Students and parents should also serve as members of the counselors advisory committee, and as they learn about the program, they will become staunch advocates. When the Ysleta ISD task force was developing its guidance philosophy, one of the students coined the following statement and was adamant that it be included as part of the philosophy: "Counselors care about students and want to see them succeed."

Advocacy within the Political Structure

Although it is unusual for the sequence of events to unfold as they did in Ysleta ISD—i.e., for the impetus to come from the political front first—support from this arena is critical. School boards receive staggering amounts of information to help them make financial, programmatic, and staff decisions. A formal presentation to the school board on the district's comprehensive guidance program is the most basic advocacy activity. It is imperative that the school board understand all the components of a comprehensive guidance program and why the shift from the historical to the proposed program is being undertaken.

As directors we make a fatal mistake if we assume that the school board understands what a comprehensive guidance program is. Ysleta ISD counselors will make a formal presentation to the school board annually on the results of the student, faculty, and parent survey and a sampling of case studies. Counselors are feeling apprehensive about this plan, but we are expecting the same level of success other districts have enjoyed because of this advocacy strategy.

Conclusion

During the initial visits to the high school campuses and in speaking to other counselors, it quickly became apparent that there was a long list of items that would require advocacy to bring about change. In 18 short months, high school counselors' contract days have been increased, the counseling plan has been completed, and an annual training calendar has been developed to support the counseling plan. The salary schedule will be studied this year, and materials are being developed. Addressing the multitude of issues is like peeling an artichoke: taking off one leaf at a time until the heart is reached. Advocacy opportunities present themselves in many different ways, at different times, and with different

people. We seize every moment to make a difference, because the opportunity may not surface again.

About the Author

Hilda Lopez is currently guidance director for the Ysleta Independent School District, El Paso, Texas. Previously she has worked as an elementary school counselor, as chair of the district's elementary counselors, as a special education counselor, as a bilingual and special education teacher, and as a speech-language pathologist. Several times she has been recognized by her peers, including being named a finalist for Texas Elementary Teacher of the Year. In addition to giving presentations on comprehensive developmental guidance programs, she has shared her expertise in many parent workshops. She can be reached at HildaLopez@Ysleta.isd.tenet.edu or at Ysleta Independent School District, 9600 Sims, El Paso TX 79925.

Chapter Ten

An Aggressive Advocacy Plan: *The State Counselor Association Response to Events in Missouri*

Sonie Trotter
Cabool Schools R-IV, Cabool, Missouri

The Missouri School Counselor Association (MSCA) has long realized the value of advocating for school counselors and comprehensive guidance programs, but several events in recent years have made that need for advocacy even greater. A continuing shortage of qualified school counselors in the state of Missouri, with projections of an even larger future shortage, is certainly a concern for the profession. That shortage has prompted a number of responses, including efforts to fill positions and increased efforts to discover the causes of the shortage. In addition, the current trends in education toward accountability, budgetary constraints on local school districts, and changes in counselor certification have increased the need in Missouri to pursue an aggressive advocacy plan.

The shortage of qualified school counselors has been a concern for several years. According to the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) *Core Data Report* (2001), in the 2000–01 school year there were 129 unfilled or vacant counseling positions, with 231 unqualified individuals working as counselors and 284 individuals with provisional certificates holding school counseling positions. Efforts to address this problem in Missouri have largely centered on an incentive program to encourage students to enter counselor training programs, but a recent study at Stephens College in Columbia, Missouri (Woolridge, 1999) revealed that a large number of counselors were choosing not to go into school counseling, and advocacy could assist not only in encouraging individuals to enter a counselor training program but also to use that education to become a school counselor.

As in the rest of the country, the trend in Missouri toward accountability has also made advocacy a priority. Missouri has long been a leader in the area

of comprehensive guidance programs, with 97% of school districts reporting to DESE full implementation of a comprehensive guidance program. The task of school counselors now becomes educating others about the significant benefits and results of comprehensive guidance programs (Lapan, Gysbers, & Sun, 1997). Missouri's accreditation program, called the Missouri School Improvement Program (MSIP), runs on a five-year cycle, and counselor input on the standards and indicators must be strong and remain strong through advocacy.

Budgetary constraints on schools in Missouri have often resulted in counselors providing non-guidance services, which takes time away from the guidance program. Although implementation of comprehensive guidance programs appear to have greatly reduced counselors' participation in non-guidance duties, advocacy remains vital in this area as well. Pointing out the importance of school counselors and their programs must be a goal for our state association.

Partly in response to the concern over the counseling shortage, Missouri recently revamped the counselor certification requirements. Advocacy becomes very important when issues such as certification are being considered. The concern is that counselors' objections will not be heard, certification will be watered down, and school counseling will suffer as a result. A strong program of advocacy seems to be the best solution.

Missouri's Advocacy Plan

Missouri has an unusually strong partnership between the DESE, counselor educators from the 14 institutions offering counseling programs, and MSCA. The need for a more aggressive advocacy plan was noted by representatives from all these organizations at about the same time. As the representative of more than 2,000 of the 2,675 school counselors employed in Missouri (DESE, 2000), MSCA was given the task of developing a new advocacy plan. Although MSCA has always considered advocacy an important task and has had various plans in place for the last 25 years, the recent events in Missouri created the need for a new, more complete and aggressive advocacy plan.

A draft plan was developed by a small committee of people composed of representatives from DESE; counselor educators; and several officers, governing board members, and past presidents of MSCA. The tasks facing the committee were to decide (a) what audiences should be addressed, (b) how to approach each of these audiences, (c) who would be responsible, and (d) what the time line would be. Once the plan was drafted, it was brought to the governing board for input and approval. Then the task of implementation began and continues today. A copy of the plan is provided in a chapter appendix.

The task of identifying the audience was accomplished quickly. School counselors in Missouri were the first priority, but the list also included administrators, school board members, legislators, parents, and community members. The list expanded to include specific groups such as chambers of commerce and the Lions Club, but those groups fit under the general heading of community.

Addressing these groups has been an ongoing task. Some ideas have worked well, others have not been as successful. The inclusion of school counselors may seem unnecessary, but MSCA discovered that many counselors were unsure of how to advocate for themselves, and although most seemed to be implementing comprehensive guidance programs, they were often at a loss when asked to explain those programs and their benefits. DESE has made available a brochure entitled *Guidance and Placement in Missouri Schools* (DESE, 2000), which counselors have found helpful for sharing with teachers, administrators, and school board members. A software presentation for counselors to use with various audiences is in the works, and MSCA has developed a series of very effective one-page policy briefs, including one for administrators, one for school board members, and one for legislators. These ideas have been shown to work.

Approaching legislators has been a challenge. MSCA provided doughnuts and juice in the lobby of the capitol for a number of years. Although the secretaries and office workers really enjoyed this service, it soon became obvious that legislators were not greatly influenced. The new plan calls for a counselor to make direct contact with every legislator, through either a visit or a personal note. A reception would be another option for reaching many legislators, but budgetary constraints have prevented MSCA from taking this step.

Administrators have been reached through their regional meeting and by sending the joint DESE and MSCA newsletter to superintendents across the state. Plans are being made to attend all the state conferences. For years MSCA representatives have attended state conferences and mounted display boards there. The new plan calls for presenting workshops, and a committee of former MSCA presidents is working on workshop ideas.

The advocacy plan calls for presentations to audiences all over the state, and scheduling these, getting on the agendas of various meetings, and finding the personnel to make the presentations are all ongoing concerns. As always, money and time remain a stumbling block for Missouri counselors.

Missouri is fortunate in many ways. We have a strong commitment to comprehensive guidance programs; a wonderful partnership between DESE, counselor educators, and MSCA; a program of evaluation (MSIP) that includes standards for counseling; and a very strong state association. But even with all these advantages, school counselors must continue to advocate for the profession.

The shortage of qualified counselors, budget cuts, legislative decisions concerning funding and qualifications, and our position in schools all demand that we have a strong and vital voice in our community. The future of our children is directly related to the strength of our voice.

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About the Author

Sonie Trotter is the director of guidance for Cabool R-IV Schools in Cabool, Missouri. Prior to that she was a middle school counselor, a high school speech and drama teacher, and a university instructor. She has been professionally active at the state level in Missouri, including a term as president of the Missouri School Counselor Association. In addition, she has served on the Missouri State Guidance Advisory and Program Revision Committees. She can be reached at Cabool Schools R-IV, 1025 Rogers Street, P.O. Box 613, Cabool, Missouri 65689.

Appendix: Advocacy Plan for Missouri School Counselor Association

MSCA has developed a plan for sharing information concerning the critical work of school counselors within comprehensive guidance programs in enhancing student achievement and development, as well as in collaborating with administrators and parents. School counselors are essential in providing a safe environment and enabling students to learn skills toward becoming productive citizens, including career and social development skills, as well as providing skills which can establish emotional stability.

Goals

1. Educate 100% of the school counselors in Missouri concerning the benefits and importance of school counselors and comprehensive guidance programs.
2. Reach 100% of the administrators in Missouri with information concerning comprehensive guidance programs and the role they play in school districts.
3. Share information with 100% of the local boards of education concerning the critical work of school counselors and comprehensive guidance programs.
4. Reach 100% of the state legislators in Missouri concerning the benefits and importance of school counselors and comprehensive guidance programs.
5. Educate Parent-Teacher Organizations, including advisory boards.
6. Secure the support of MSTA and NEA and other teacher groups in Missouri by sharing information concerning the impact comprehensive programs have on student achievement, as well as other benefits for students and teachers.
7. Contact chambers of commerce to share information regarding comprehensive guidance programs and the benefits for the business community.
8. Contact service organizations, such as Kiwanis, Rotary, etc., with information concerning comprehensive guidance programs and their importance.
9. Educate 100% of the counselor educators and counseling students in the area of comprehensive school guidance programs and their importance and benefits, as well as techniques for advocating for these programs.

Year One—This first year MSCA will target three major groups, while beginning to contact all groups. The major emphasis will be:

1. Counselors in the state of Missouri
   Strategies:
   a. Continue education through workshops emphasizing the importance and benefits of comprehensive programs.
   b. Develop presentations for counselor use in helping to explain comprehensive guidance programs
   c. Develop a poster, to be distributed at the state conference and through district meetings, explaining comprehensive guidance programs.
2. Administrators
   Strategies:
   a. Give presentations to state, district, and individual groups by dedicated and passionate counselors.
   b. Distribute briefs (already developed).
3. Legislators
   Strategies:
   a. Distribute briefs (already developed).
   b. Legislative Day—include a personal appointment and contact with each legislator by a counselor from his/her area. Provide all counselors with a step-by-step instruction sheet. If unable to meet a personal note can be left. Make the presence of school counselors felt and take time to educate. Follow up with a letter. Be sure to contact legislators known to be supportive.
   c. Begin to lay the groundwork for much-needed legislation concerning funding and support by contacting supporters.
   d. Involve the media as much as possible.

Year Two—While continuing to work with the groups listed under Year One, MSCA will target three new groups.

1. School boards
   Strategies:
   a. Presentations will be given to all boards by dividing districts and making a commitment to reaching 100% of the districts personally.
   b. Speakers bureau will be made available to all districts for use by communities or boards.
   c. Posters, briefs, and brochures will be distributed to all local boards.

d. Continued display of the MSCA exhibit at the state conference.

2. Educational groups

   Strategies:

   a. Presentations to local and district groups concerning comprehensive guidance and its role in the school
   b. Distribution of material at state conferences and district meetings.
   c. Making the speakers bureau available for PDC committees.
   d. Billboards and TV announcements

3. Parent groups

   Strategies:

   a. Work with advisory and parent groups.
   b. Brochures and newsletters
   c. Speakers bureau

Year Three—As we continue work with the previous groups, this year we will target these groups:

1. Community members
2. Service groups
3. Businesses
4. Labor unions

Strategies will include presentations, billboards, media announcements, personal contacts, brochures, and newsletter articles. We will continually work on plans to focus on these groups, while keeping up with the other targeted groups. As we continue with this project, MSCA will involve more and more groups in assisting counselors in spreading the word concerning school comprehensive guidance programs and their importance.

Part 5

Critical Issues in Using Technology to Support Comprehensive Guidance Programs

Using Technology to Support Comprehensive Guidance Program Operations: *A Variety of Strategies*

Judy Bowers
Tucson Unified School District
Tucson, Arizona

Solving the "Time and Information" Dilemma through Technology: *Electronic Student Registration and Data System*

Bruce Evans & Scott Ward
Provo High School
Provo, Utah

Using Technology to Support Comprehensive Guidance Programs

Twenty-first century technology available to support guidance program operations ranges from enhanced telephone systems to advanced presentation media to electronic mail to Internet connections. Schools and school systems are working hard to raise the money it takes to provide these resources in order to develop students' skills and facilitate the work of educators. Professionals are challenged to develop their technological know-how to keep up with these developments.

When a comprehensive guidance program is well designed and school counselors' jobs within it are well defined, new resources can be integrated to improve the delivery of the program. The expanding use of increasingly available technology enhances guidance programs by contributing to the improvement of some program activities (e.g., individualizing work with students) and by streamlining some non-guidance elements of large guidance responsibilities (e.g., student data collection). A guidance program may be impaired when technology either is not provided or takes on undue importance for staff members.

Guidance programs that do not have access to technological resources are often perceived by those who use technology to spend time needlessly on matters that more extensive use of technology would enable them to devote time to critical student concerns, e.g. student counseling on school learning, bullying, stress, etc. When undue attention is paid to technological resources, however, time can be taken away from student services. When the use of technological resources drives the guidance program calendar to be different from what students need, the program delivery focus shifts in the wrong direction. In other words, if the use of technology supports legitimate objectives and delivery of the program, it is program enhancing. If technology is overused or underused, it is program impairing.

Chapter Eleven

Using Technology to Support Comprehensive Guidance Program Operations: *A Variety of Strategies*

Judy Bowers
Tucson Unified School District, Tucson, Arizona

School counselors have discovered that the computer is as important a communication tool as the telephone. Yes, technology has become a necessity for school counselors in the 21st century. Counselors use computers in their daily work with students, in their lesson preparation to meet the competencies of their developmental guidance programs, and as a communication tool on district, state, and national levels.

Tucson Unified School District (TUSD), where I work, has approximately 180 school counselors working in 74 elementary schools, 20 middle schools, and 10 high schools. The goal for the 2000–01 school year is for all the counselors to have their own computers. I have been working with the director of our Technology Department for the past three years to make this plan a reality. Of course, everything comes down to money, and computers are an expensive item. This director has been a strong supporter of the school counselors, and she believes the computer is as important a tool as the telephone. She has been a strong advocate to secure the financial backing to obtain the computers. From our experience, important things to remember when advocating for new technology is don't get too pushy, and send polite reminders not nasty notes.

In-District Communication via Electronic Mail

At the district level, my staff communicates with the counselors via computer. All counselors have their own e-mail addresses, and the guidance administrative secretary has set up list serves for the elementary, middle, and high school counselors. She is able to send out meeting notices, reminders about special happenings, and other information very

quickly. This capacity has saved the guidance secretary many hours of mailing time. In addition, my staff corresponds with principals and district administrators via the Internet. I have found that principals like receiving e-mail notification of counselors' meetings. If they know the topic of the meeting, they are more willing to send their counselors. In addition, they appreciate notice of when the counselor will be out of the school. Keeping lines of communication open is very important to a successful counseling program, and the Internet has helped make this happen.

Obtaining Professional Resources via the Internet

Counseling lessons are available from many sources via the Internet. Through workshops, counselors have learned of a number of websites that are useful in finding lessons. The resource counselors in my office have become experts in finding Internet resources, and they answer resource requests from the counselors. The consensus among the counselors is that the Internet has saved them many hours of searching in the library for materials or waiting for books to arrive. A very important feature of Internet resources is that most are free. Because many school counselors have limited budgets for materials, they appreciate being able to obtain current information for the cost of paper.

The website of the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) is a gold mine of information. ASCA has a modern, up-to-date site that is easy for school counselors to use. Information on joining the association, yearly conference registration forms, and ethical information are just a few of the topics available on the site. There is a "members only" section where special packets have been loaded for members to download.

Use of Computers in Direct Work with Students

Counselors work with students to access a variety of information via the computer. High school counselors have become avid users of the many resources that make it easier to access information for students. A number of commercial companies have published career and college software that enables students to take an interest inventory, review a list of job options, and look in postsecondary programs of study. In addition, with a counselor's help, students are able to locate many scholarship opportunities. My district has purchased two career and college software programs, which have been installed in the computer labs of all of the high schools.

As a component of the developmental guidance program, counselors use these programs in classrooms at each grade level. Ninth-grade students typically will take the interest inventory and begin exploring career options. Tenth-grade students will examine career options and begin looking at postsecondary options. In 11th grade, students will focus on postsecondary options and begin identifying scholarship opportunities. Then in 12th grade, students will use the software to firm up their career, postsecondary, and scholarship choices and look for job opportunities. Through the Internet, it is possible to look into each state's job database and find job openings and salary information. Another interesting Internet search for students is to take a virtual tour of various college campuses. Students today have a wealth of information available to them through the computer.

Many middle school counselors use similar software as they teach career awareness lessons. As part of a district technology program that was implemented several years ago, the director of technology purchased career software for all 20 middle schools. In retrospect, the important factor in gaining the support of district-level administrators for this purchase was to explain how the technology and software would enhance our school guidance program. Another important factor is always to show how the program enhances student achievement and serves all students.

Collaboration with Other District Administrators

> Developing positive relations with district administrators is probably the most important strategy in the success of a guidance program. In addition, it is helpful if district administrators are familiar with the overall developmental guidance program and know a little about you. In looking back over the years, I feel that one of the factors contributing to my successful relationship with the technology director is that we have worked together for 20 years. During those years, we have worked together at a school site where she was a math teacher and I was a high school counselor. Later we worked together on various committees over the years, and now we both work at the district level. Our mutual respect has grown and contributes to our working together in a positive manner for all students.

As a guidance coordinator, I depend on technology as an important asset in performing my job responsibilities. An important feature is the ease of communicating with counselors and principals. Most people read their e-mail on a daily basis and respond promptly. This type of correspondence is more efficient than playing phone tag or using the mail.

Out-of-District Communication via Electronic Mail and the Internet

In addition to corresponding with district personnel, I also correspond with counselors in neighboring districts, across the state, and around the country. Frequently I will receive e-mail from a student in a counselor training program who has found our TUSD Guidance and Counseling Handbook on the Internet. Usually the student will have some questions about the program and want additional information.

My most exciting use of the Internet is in connecting with prospective employees. Several years ago, a counselor in New Hampshire found me in Tucson, we corresponded about counseling openings, and he ended up taking a counseling position with my district. All counseling positions are posted weekly on the employment section of the TUSD home page, and application forms can be downloaded as well. This wonderful use of technology allows interested counselors to check job openings on a weekly basis, fill out the appropriate forms, and fax them to the Human Relations Office. Interested counselors can also locate the guidance home page and find my phone number and e-mail address.

Professional Counselor Support via the Internet

Counselors have found many resources available on the Internet for classroom lessons, for professional information, and for parent workshops. In addition there are list serves enabling counselors to communicate with other counselors across the world. The elementary vice president of ASCA has developed a list serve for elementary counselors and sponsors frequent chat rooms to discuss issues of concern to elementary counselors. Counselors will share many lessons via the list serve, including information about websites that have outstanding materials. The American School Counselor Association provides information on the ASCA website for counselors. As a guidance coordinator, I feel it is always wise to know the leaders in the counseling field and to establish beneficial relationships. By communicating with ASCA board members, the executive director, and staff via the website, I have been able to contribute suggestions of benefit to all counselors and to share with the national leaders information that was developed by the counselors in my district.

Program Support via the District Home Page

TUSD has an intranet system that counselors can use to look at student and school achievement. Training is provided each year for the new counselors and for counselors who wish a review. Counselors and principals cooperate in using this information to evaluate students' performance and suggest solutions for raising achievement. In addition, the district has a very extensive home page with many links. The main page has links to broad areas like employment, school calendar, professional development, school board, and departments. Counselors can use the TUSD home page to access job openings, professional development listings, and information about the various departments in the district, thereby saving time making on phone calls and waiting for information to arrive in the mail. A good example is the link from the professional development page to the Arizona Department of Education, where counselors can download recertification information instantly. To identify high schools that have career centers, counselors are able to go to a district high school page and then look at the career center links. It is possible to look at career centers in Omaha, Nebraska, or Orlando, Florida, and obtain ideas from them.

Future Plans

Plans for the future include updating the guidance and counseling home page to provide direct links to resources such as parent information, career and college information, ASCA, violence prevention, counselor professional development dates, and more. In addition, counselors will receive yearly training in word processing, registration procedures, and the use of the Internet and intranet. The district Technology Department offers many levels of word processing instruction free to the counselors. For example, many counselors use PowerPoint in designing classroom presentations for the TUSD Comprehensive Competency Based Guidance Program.

The counselors in TUSD are fortunate to have available up-to-date technology to support their comprehensive guidance program. District administrators and site principals believe counselors must have access to technology every day to support their programs. All district counselors have the support of resource counselors, and they have many professional development opportunities to improve their technology skills.

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American School Counselor Association website:
http://www.schoolcounselor.org/

About the Author

Judy Bowers has been the guidance coordinator for the K–12 Comprehensive Competency Based Guidance Program in the Tucson Unified School District, Arizona, for seven years. Previously, she has worked as a high school guidance department coordinator, counselor, and home economics teacher. Additionally she is a university instructor and consultant. She has been an active leader in the American School Counselor Association and is a recipient of ASCA's Supervisor/ Administrator Award. She can be reached at judy.bowers@tusd.k12.az.us

Chapter Twelve

Solving the "Time and Information" Dilemma through Technology: *Electronic Student Registration and Data Systems*

Bruce Evans & Scott Ward
Provo High School, Provo, Utah

Time and information—for a comprehensive guidance counselor that's what it is all about really. Given enough time and good information about a student's wants and needs counselors are able to do a great job in guiding and counseling that student. The problem is how to find enough time in a day to do all the things that are expected and still have the time (and sanity) to guide students successfully. The following is a quick look at problems and solutions to the "time and information" dilemma.

Problem: Registration

A normal year in our lives as counselors used to go something like this: A month or two before school ended in the spring, we would hand out registration materials and ask the students to make "registration requests" for the next year. The scan sheets they filled out requesting courses would be computerized and eventually we would have complete schedules for all but 10% of our student body. We would work with the last 10% to complete their schedules, and then sometime in the summer, fall schedules would be sent to all students. This would normally happen in August, and within a day or two students and their parents would begin lining up in the counseling center to change their schedules. Even though students had individually requested the courses they received, they had for some reason changed their minds over the summer and now wanted different classes, different teachers, or a different period. The line of students and parents would lengthen as school started and would remain for four or five weeks into the first term. By the time counselors finished

orienting new students, helping students who had incomplete schedules, and enduring students who just wanted to change their schedules, they discovered that nearly 100% of the student body had been helped at least once. After completing that process, counselors would have about one hour to lick their wounds before other responsibilities would kick in—not the least of which would be registering students for second semester. Add in some graduation responsibilities and a little bit of personal counseling and crisis management, and by the end of the year, counselors were only about 150 days behind.

Considering all of the preceding issues combined with the great concept and responsibility of comprehensive guidance and counseling, we were soon painfully aware that there was no way under our current mode of operation to make everything happen. Our frustration level caused us to ask our computer programmers if they could track the number of class changes that took place each semester after we had sent out the original course schedules. It was no great surprise to discover that students were changing more than 70% of the courses they had requested in the spring. They were accomplishing this by coming into the counseling center personally, sending Mom or Dad to the counseling center, calling the principal, calling the superintendent, crying, yelling, or using whatever other method would get them the schedule they thought they really wanted.

We soon understood a very important concept: The longer the interval between the time students registered and the time school actually began, the greater the chance that students would change their minds about what they wanted. And in the resulting class change process, counselors were being emotionally beaten up by a constant stream of upset or angry people coming to their offices requesting changes that in most cases were very difficult to accommodate.

Based on this revelation, we were forced to look at other options almost as a matter of self-preservation, if for no other reason. We could force students to stay with the courses they had requested in the spring, we could register students a day or two before school started in an arena registration, we could continue the crazy things we had been doing, or we could try to find some totally new concept and process that would work better than any of these options.

We also had another big problem. In the little bit of time left after registration was over, we were doing our best to provide each student with career guidance and individual help in designing a four-year high school course plan. We were also working with students to update the details of their course plan for the next year. We discovered that after all our good work in designing a course plan, when it came time for students to register, our planning had very little bearing on what courses they actually took. The most likely determiner of

which courses students registered for was the classes their friends were taking. We felt that all of our careful planning went almost completely unheeded.

Problem: Student Data Used in Planning and Guidance

Along with the registration nightmare, we found several other items that were being done either in a very time-consuming way or with incomplete information, complicating both counselors' and students' lives. These were some of the obstacles we faced:

- planning information being stored in paper files;
- counselors not having easy access to the information;
- students and parents not having easy access to the information;
- no follow-through at the time of registration;
- counselors hand-writing and recording students' progress toward graduation;
- counselors delivering career information from written sources that were only periodically updated; and
- students not having easy access to college and career information.

Solution: Electronic Registration System

If counselors wished to deliver guidance and counseling services to all students, it was neither possible nor reasonable to continue to handle registration in a time-consuming way. By tradition, the counselors had become registration and course-changing experts, and that process used up about 50% to 60% of their time. To solve this problem, we partnered with a local software company to produce an Internet/telephone registration system. (There was at the time nothing on the market that provided the controls needed for a high school registration system.) With this electronic registration system, counselors are no longer the "gatekeepers" for class changes. The counselors' role is to guide, advise, inform, and in general be an information resource to students. The system works as follows:

1. The electronic counselor in electronic registration

a. After counselors provide guidance to all students and approve their four-year course plans, the plans are computerized and linked to the electronic registration system.

b. The registration system can monitor whether students select classes that follow their four-year guidance plan.

c. Categories of required courses are tracked through a concept called CORE. For example, if in his or her guidance plan, a student has elected

to take biology in 10th grade, CORE allows the student scheduling flexibility to select any science course. During registration if a student selects a science class other than biology that new course is then allowed in place of biology. All CORE requirements must be scheduled before a student can schedule electives. Counselors have the ability through the registration system to designate which courses in a subject area will meet CORE requirements by grade and pathway. (See sample screen in Figure 1.)

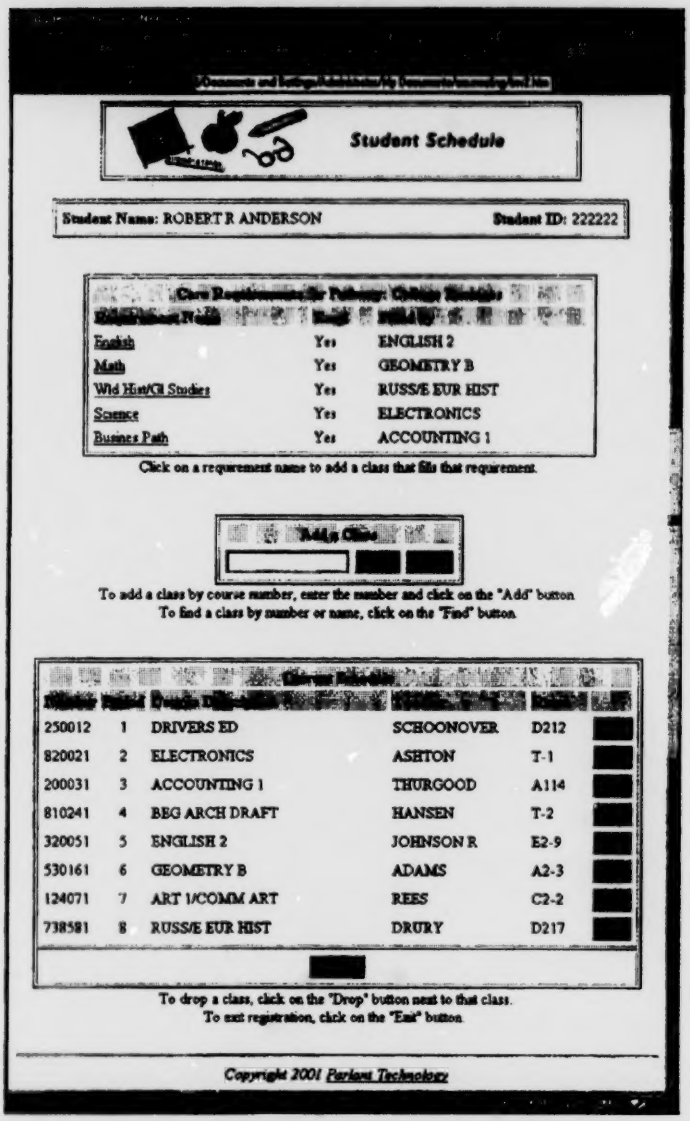
Student Schedule
Student Name: ROBERT R ANDERSON
Student ID: 222222
English Yes ENGLISH 2
Math Yes GEOMETRY B
Wld Hist/Cl Studies Yes RUSS/E EUR HIST
Science Yes ELECTRONICS
Business Path Yes ACCOUNTING 1
Click on a requirement name to add a class that fills that requirement.
To add a class by course number, enter the number and click on the "Add" button.
To find a class by number or name, click on the "Find" button.
250012 1 DRIVERS ED SCHOONOVER D212
820021 2 ELECTRONICS ASHTON T-1
200031 3 ACCOUNTING 1 THURGOOD A114
810241 4 BEG ARCH DRAFT HANSEN T-2
320051 5 ENGLISH 2 JOHNSON R E2-9
530161 6 GEOMETRY B ADAMS A2-3
124071 7 ART 1/COMM ART REES C2-2
738581 8 RUSS/E EUR HIST DRURY D217
To drop a class, click on the "Drop" button next to that class.
To exit registration, click on the "Exit" button.
Copyright 2001 Pariant Technology

Figure 1: Student Registration Screen Showing Sample CORE Requirements

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

a. Students register on the Internet or by telephone during the three weeks immediately preceding the start of school. The registration system is also open for three days after school begins.
b. Students choose their classes, periods, and teachers. Because in the past students had come to the counselors and complained until they got their way, we decided to let them have their own way from the beginning. We were very concerned that students might choose the wrong courses, gang up on a particular teacher to make his or her life miserable, or make other inappropriate choices, none of which has come to pass. Students have proven that when they have all the opportunities to choose the best courses for them, they are able to make wise scheduling choices.
c. After the third day of school, the system is shut off and students are locked into their classes. We give them the three-day window so that if they feel they have made a bad decision about a class, they can make a change on a space-available basis. The only changes allowed after the third day are for emergency situations and must be individually approved by the teachers involved and the principal. (Again, counselors have relinquished the role of "gatekeepers" in registration.)
d. The percentage of counselor time spent in the registration and course-changing process has been reduced from approximately 50% or 60% to less than 10%. The time saved is now used to deliver comprehensive guidance services to all students.
e. Electronic registration has the ability to keep general track of what courses a counselor, student, and parents have agreed the student should take. For example, if a student is interested in medicine and selects a science "pathway," the computer is programmed to require a science course each year. It does not require that the science course scheduled be the exact course planned, but it does not allow the student to register for any electives until the science requirement is met. This allows the student flexibility without compromising the good guidance decisions that have been made earlier.

The Provo High School Internet/phone registration system requires a student ID number and password for access, so it cannot be viewed by non-students. However, an instructional demo can be reached through the Provo High School home page at www.phs.provo.k12.ut.us. From the home page, click on "Registration," then "Log in to Parentlink," then "Click here for a product demonstration." From there simply follow

the on-screen instructions. For more information or for assistance, contact the authors.

Solution: Electronic Planning

There is no panacea to solve all the guidance and planning problems faced by counselors, students, and parents. However, we have found a few strategies to be of great benefit in the guidance process. Most schools have students plan out the courses they will take throughout high school. A program written by one of our computer programming students allows incoming freshmen enter their four-year plan into the computer. Among other things, the student must decide whether to set a goal of entering a university or college after high school (see Figure 2). Statistically about 70% of freshmen will tell counselors their goal is to enter a university after graduation from high school. However, if left on their own at registration time, only 15% will register for the correct courses to meet university entrance requirements. Using this guidance plan, 40% of students select a university pathway, and the Internet/phone registration system causes the same 40% to select the appropriate university preparatory courses each year.

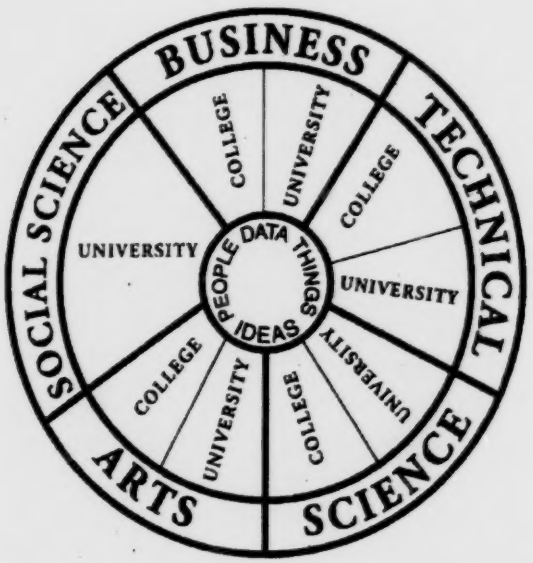

Figure 2. Education Career Pathways in Freshman Four-Year Plan

We have found that an interesting thing happens when students understand that the decisions they make in the guidance process influence what courses they are able to take when they actually register. Students begin to pay attention and plan meaningful schedules. Using an electronic registration system enables electronic monitoring of every registration and causes students to register for the classes required for their grade and pathway.

Provo High School Six-Step Plan to Comprehensive Guidance Individual Planning

The six-step process diagrammed in Figure 3 and described in the following text helps students receive good guidance and make much better decisions. The outer circle in Figure 3 represents the decision-making/exploration sequence, and the inner circle represents the update and follow-up piece that results in good course decisions at the time of registration.

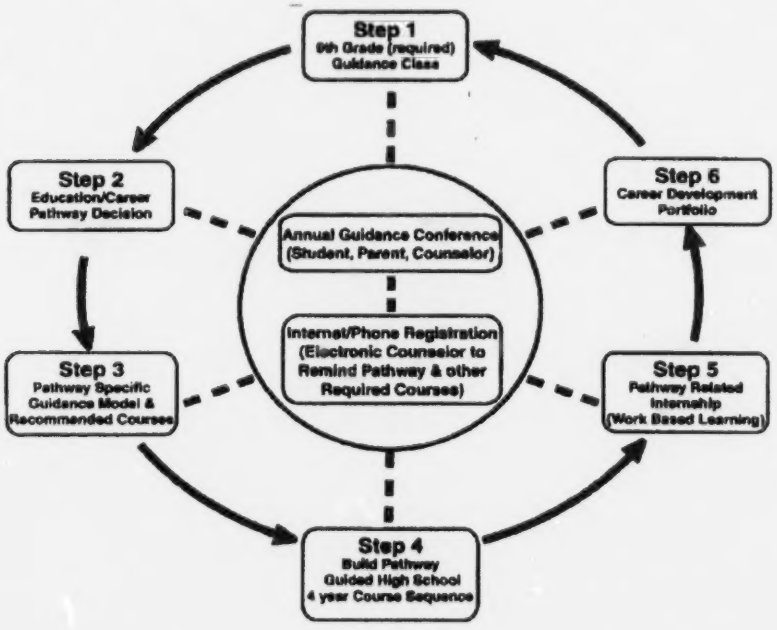

Figure 3. SEOP Process for Comprehensive Guidance Individual Planning

Step 1: Students spend one semester (18 weeks) in an SEOP (student education occupation plan)/information processing class. We use a 12-step process in the class to prepare students to make the necessary decisions so that high school can be of the most value possible. The Next Step Planning materials guide the process.

Step 2: The primary guiding decision that directs students' class selection and sequence is their education/career pathway decision. This decision (assisted by the Internet/phone registration system) results in students being prepared for what they will do after high school. This decision also affects their graduation requirements and internship opportunities.

Step 3: When students make an education/career pathway decision, they are given a planning worksheet that suggests course sequences and outlines options. Although it gives important guidance, the plan still includes high school–appropriate guided flexibility. This written guidance model also includes information about career options available for students interested in that pathway.

Step 4: Using the pathway guidance model provided, students all chart four-year class "pathway through the forest" sequences to graduation that prepare them for their post–high school plans.

Step 5: After taking pathway-related courses in school, students are linked with internships providing quality job experience relating to their current interests and career goals. Students gain exposure and hands-on opportunities in areas where they normally could not get practical experience. Many students get a "leg up" on jobs relating to their interests, and they are able to improve their college and work portfolios through the internship experience.

Step 6: Students prepare a career development portfolio to present to prospective employers, scholarship committees, or others that have some say in a student's future. Employers in the county expect prospective employees to present their skill qualifications through the career development portfolio. Students are motivated to prepare the portfolio based on their internship experiences. Establishing the importance of the portfolio and motivating students to create one are important parts of the program.

Note: Parents are invited to the school each year to meet with their child and a counselor to review and approve the student SEOP decisions. They also receive information about courses, college planning, apprenticeships, internships, scholarships, etc., relevant to the student's grade level.

Electronic Access to Student Data

Most districts store an incredible amount of data on their computer systems. As we began to consider how best to use these data, we developed several menus to provide counselors with time-saving information from district and school databases. Once you start thinking in terms of what would be helpful and save time, you will find many tasks that the computer can do for you. Following are some of the menu items available from every counselor's computer. A student or parent can access the items marked with an asterisk (*) on any computer in the school or over the Internet. (Password protection ensures that students/ parents can view only their own personal information, not information about other students.)

Class schedule*	Looks up the schedule of any student
Class requests*	Makes requests for next semester's or next year's classes (student operated)
Credit evaluation*	Evaluates each student's credits and lists which categories and amounts of credit are still needed to graduate (see Figure 4)
Counselor conference notes	Creates private notes or academic/ graduation notes for viewing by any counselor
Midyear new student registration	Creates a grid of desired courses with available seats (see Figure 5)
Four-year course plans*	Displays a student's four-year plan (see Figure 6)
Student biographical information	Contains address, phone number, birth date, and other identifying information
What to take to fulfill a required graduation category*	Lists courses that will fill each required category

Report cards*	Shows both current and past report cards for a student
Attendance*	Shows absences and tardies for any student (This information can be appended to the bottom of most other student reports.)
Current term progress grades*	Displays grades to date in current courses for any student.
Status on each assignment in each class*	Displays all assignments and scores for each assignment.
Student search—Identifying students who meet certain positive or negative categories	Searches all students by specific parameters (e.g., all students who are behind in credit, have excessive absences, have a particular GPA or GPAs higher/lower than a certain level, have chosen a particular pathway)
Course offering list	Lists all courses taught in the high school
Printed master schedule for students*	Creates or prints a master schedule for students to use at registration time
Notes to teachers	Creates a note to be sent to a teacher about a particular student
Class lists—course sections	Creates a list of students in a particular class
Grade point average*	Shows the GPA of any student
Class rank*	Shows the class rank of any student
Student count by gender, ethnicity, handicap, multilingual	Shows both the number of students in each category and their names

Look up student by first name	Looks up all students with a particular first name (This option is helpful when the counselor cannot remember a student's last name.)
Standardized test results	Looks up a student's scores on ACT, SAT, and other tests
Students with complete schedules	Shows all students with complete schedules
Student with incomplete schedules	Shows all students with incomplete schedules
Immunization record	Shows a complete record of immunizations for a student
Electronic note to teacher to summon student from class	Creates a request to have a student sent to the counseling center from a classroom
Electronic student photograph	Displays a photo of any student
Identify students by group in a given pathway	Finds all students who have chosen the same pathway

As examples of the information accessed from these various menu options, a credit evaluation screen, a new student registration screen, and a four-year plan screen are shown in Figures 4, 5, and 6. The credit evaluation form shown in Figure 4 electronically evaluates the credit a student earns at each high school grade level and then lists what requirements still must be met for the student to graduate. Counselors, administrators, students, and parents can view this information, which is password-protected, on any computer in the school or over the Internet. In addition, this information is handed out to each student with the registration materials.

In the past, when a new student registered in the middle of a term, counselors would have had to spend one or two hours finding available courses and creating a workable schedule that met the student's needs. The midyear new student registration menu item allows the counselor to type in the courses the student wishes to take, then the computer creates a grid showing only those

Credit Evaluation

Student # 111111 Student Name John Smith Grade 11 Term 3 375-0000 April 28, 2001

Educ Path University Career Code 020201

Career Path Science Specific Path Biological

Category	Req	9th	10th	11th	12th	total	need	curr	comb	bal
	transcript history								this semester forecast	
English	4.00	1.00	1.00	.50	–	2.50	1.50	.50	3.00	1.00
Fine Arts	1.50	–	–	.50	–	.50	1.00	–	0.50	1.00
Geography	0.50	0.50	–	–	–	0.50	–	–	0.50	–
US History	1.00	–	–	0.50	–	0.50	0.50	0.50	1.00	–
Global Studies	0.50	–	0.50	–	–	0.50	–	–	0.50	–
World History	0.50	–	0.50	–	–	0.50	–	–	0.50	–
Social Studies	0.50	–	–	–	–	–	0.50	–	–	0.50
Mathematics	2.00	1.00	1.00	–	–	2.00	–	0.50	2.50	–
Life Science	1.00	1.00	–	–	–	1.00	–	0.50	1.50	–
Physical Science	1.00	–	1.00	–	–	1.00	–	–	1.00	–
Health	0.50	–	0.50	–	–	0.50	–	–	0.50	–
PE -Core	1.00	1.00	–	–	–	1.00	–	–	1.00	–
PE - Elect	0.50	–	–	–	–	–	0.50	0.50	0.50	–
Practical Arts	1.50	–	0.50	0.50	–	1.00	0.50	0.50	1.50	–
SEOP	0.50	0.50	–	–	–	0.50	–	–	0.50	–
Advanced Studies	2.00	–	1.00	1.00	–	2.00	–	–	2.00	–
Elective	4.50	1.00	0.25	–	–	1.25	3.25	–	1.25	2.25
Total 9 - 12	23.0	6.00	6.25	3.00	–	15.25	7.75	3.00	18.25	4.75

Figure 4. Sample Credit Evaluation Screen

courses that still have seats available (see Figure 5). Within about two minutes the counselor can create a workable schedule for the student. The four-year course plan in Figure 6 can be printed out and given to each student at registration time as a reminder of which courses he or she had planned to take.

Other Useful Electronically Accessible Guidance Tools

In addition, several commercially available computer software programs have become helpful in the process of delivering good guidance to students. Among these are *Choices* (Ogdensburg, NY: Careerware),

New Student Registration

83401 Grade 11 Semester 02

#### Subject	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9000 Release Time		21 10 22* 39		42 3	51 2 52 9	62 9		81 3 82 13 83 12
3310 American Lit Hon			31* 8					
6620 AP Biology				41* 24				
7300 US History	11 3		31 7 32 8	41 25		31 13	71 3 72 10	81 18
6396 Sports Med 2					51 19	61* 3		
5446 AP Statistics							71* 3	
6030 Mod Dance 1								81* 2

re-enter numbers or end (R/E) ?

Figure 5. Sample Midyear New Student Registration Screen

Discover (Iowa City: ACT-Discover) and other programs that allow students to explore interests, colleges, or financial information. Much of the same information that most software packages deliver is also available over the Internet.

Conclusion

Like all humans, counselors tend to continue to do things the way they have always done them. For the most part program changes come about slowly because counselors don't have the time to consider (let alone implement) new ideas. The system presented in this chapter did not happen all at once. Changes came one at a time over the course of years. The overall effect, however, is that the face of counseling at Provo High School has changed. By accessing data electronically, counselors now know much more about each student's needs and progress in school. They also are able to spend a much greater portion of their day

SEOP Student Courses for Provo High School

Four-Year Plan

Student # 111111 Student Name John Smith Grade 11 April 28, 2001

Educ Path University Career Code 020201

Career Path Science Specific Path Biological

SEOP Conference Notes:

9th Semester 1	10th Semester 1	11th Semester 1	12th Semester 1
3150 ENGLISH 1H	3250 ENGLISH 2H	3310 AMER LIT H	3475 COLL WRI H
5201 ALGEBRA 2A	5450 PRE CALC A	5501 AP CALCLUS	6675 AP CHEM
7100 GEOGRAPHY	7390 M EAST HIS	7310 US HIST H	6390 INTRO EMT
6081 INTRO PE-G	6646 CHEMSTRY H	6620 BIOLOGY AP	9419 TRIG 106
4320 SPANISH 2	4325 SPANISH 3H	4355 AP SPANIS4	4700 CHIL DEVE
6610 BIOLOGY H	6755 PHYSIOL H	5941 PHIL ORCH	5941 PHIL ORCH
9000 REL TIME	9000 REL TIME	9000 REL TIME	9000 REL TIME
9th Semester 2	**10th Semester 2**	**11th Semester 2**	**12th Semester 2**
3150 ENGLISH 1H	3250 ENGLISH 2H	3310 AMER LIT H	3475 COLL WRI H
5202 ALGEBRA 2B	5451 PRE CALC B	5501 AP CALCLUS	6675 AP CHEM
2222 SEOP	6646 CHEMSTRY H	7310 US HIST H	4701 AD CHD DEV
6081 INTRO PE-G	4325 SPANISH 3H	6620 BIOLOGY AP	5941 PHIL ORCH
4320 SPANISH 2	6755 PHYSIOL H	4355 AP SPANIS4	9000 REL TIME
6610 BIOLOGY H	9000 REL TIME	5941 PHIL ORCH	1225 MATC CNA
9000 REL TIME	7160 MOD HIST	9000 REL TIME	

Code to be entered / 'C'redit evaluation / 'N'otes ?

Figure 6. Sample Four-Year Plan Screen

implementing the comprehensive guidance program and much less time scheduling classes and handling paperwork.

About the Authors

Bruce Evans is director of counseling at Provo High School in Utah. He has worked in education for 30 years as both a classroom teacher and high school counselor. He has been honored as Utah Counselor of the Year, and under his guidance Provo High School received the National Planning for Life Award in 1998. The Internet/telephone system described in this article is his design. He has extensive experience as a national presenter, presenting at several conferences and workshops each year. Bruce can be reached at (801) 373-6550, ext. 337 or brucee@provo.k12.ut.us.

Scott Ward is internship director at Provo High School in Utah. In his 28 years as an educator, he has focused on the process of providing relevant work-based learning for students. Currently he is president of the Work Based Learning Division of the Utah Association for Career and Technical Education. He has presented at the National Society of Experiential Education (NSEE) and the Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE), and currently does one- and two-day training workshops for several districts around the country. Scott can be reached at 801-370-4603 or at scottw@provo.k12.ut.us.

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Part 6

Critical Issues in Evaluation of Comprehensive Guidance Programs

Comprehensive Guidance Results-Based Evaluation: *Developing a Practical Approach*

Stan J. Maliszewski
The University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona
&
John J. Mackiel
Omaha Public Schools, Omaha, Nebraska

Accountability for Comprehensive Guidance Program Delivery and Quality: *Program Templates*

Sadie Woodard & Benny Malone
Cypress-Fairbanks Independent School District
Houston, Texas

Evaluation of Comprehensive Guidance Programs

The guidance program staff is accountable for the delivery and quality of a comprehensive guidance program. Being accountable entails having and conforming to standards for the program, including standards for counselors' use of time. It also entails assessing and articulating the effects of the program and its activities on students' development of personal, social, career, or educational competencies; on students' behavior or achievement; or on the school climate. Evidence of reductions in barriers to student success—such as decreases in incidents of violence, school failures, or dropouts—may also be used to document the effectiveness of a comprehensive guidance program.

By definition, a comprehensive guidance program has an expressed purpose and mission as well as a design (i.e., program standards). Guidance personnel are held accountable for adhering to the design in efficient program delivery and for achieving the mission through high program quality. Evidence that the program that is being delivered is aligned with the established standards for guidance curriculum, individual planning, responsive services, and system support shows program supporters how their program investment has been spent. Evidence that the program helps to improve the condition of students and other program users shows both program users and supporters what they are getting for their investment. When such evidence is not available, the results and value of these investments of energy, time, and other resources are unclear, making the investments vulnerable to outside, often non-professional influences.

Chapter Thirteen

Comprehensive Guidance Results-Based Evaluation: *Developing a Practical Approach*

Stan J. Maliszewski
The University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona
&
John J. Mackiel
Omaha Public Schools, Omaha, Nebraska

"Don't report only what school counselors are doing. Report how students are different because of counselors delivering the guidance program." This was the charge of the superintendent to counselors in the Omaha Public Schools in 1987. Today the current superintendent of the Omaha Public Schools, school staff, and the Omaha community ask questions regarding results reporting and guidance plan implementation. Perhaps the questions are reframed, but the current school superintendent and stakeholders in the guidance program are still focused on "results-based evaluation." With greater restrictions on public spending, the need to validate the use of school counselors and ensure the growth of the school guidance program is more apparent than ever before (Gillies, 1993).

While district leaders and others are asking questions about guidance accountability and evaluation, there is a growing interest in guidance as a program rather than simply a service. Services are often ancillary and are more vulnerable during difficult budget decisions. Numerous state departments of education have adopted comprehensive competency-based guidance as the model for delivering a guidance program to all students. Comprehensive competency-based guidance results in a well-defined proactive and reactive program (Starr & Gysbers, 1988).

A Comprehensive Competency-Based Approach to Guidance

Counselors in the Omaha Public Schools realize that an inquiry as to what counselors do provides an opportunity to educate others about their

school's comprehensive guidance program (Johnson & Johnson, 1991). A well-defined K–12 comprehensive school guidance program consists of four major components (guidance curriculum, individual planning, responsive services, and system support) delivered in three domains (career/occupational, academic/educational, personal/social) to *all* students while the unique needs of individual students are simultaneously addressed (Maliszewski, Pilkington, & Radd, 1994–95).

Comprehensive competency-based guidance is an integral part of the Omaha Public Schools total educational program. The program is organized and implemented by school counselors with the support of teachers, administrators, community agencies, and advisory committees. To this extent, it is indeed a school and community collaborative effort (Maliszewski, Pilkington, & Radd, 1996).

Results-based evaluation and assessment of guidance and counseling have proven to be the most difficult tasks encountered since the district adopted comprehensive guidance (Moore, 1999). Answering the question, "How are students different as a result of the school guidance program?" continues to be a challenge for district counselors. The good news is that progress is being made. Counselors are approaching the challenge with creative K–12 pilot evaluation projects that are getting closer to capturing the results of the comprehensive guidance program.

Determining a Method of Program Evaluation

The first step toward determining a method of program evaluation and counselor accountability for the district was the organization of a working committee to review research and to identify other school districts that were attempting to conduct results-based evaluation. The supervisor of guidance chaired this committee. The 18 members consisted of counselors from all grade levels, university counselor educators, and district-level administrators representing curriculum and instruction, research, psychological services, and connectivity. A relatively large committee was selected because of the extent of work involved and as a means to garner districtwide support.

Committee members were enthusiastic about the charge and continued to maintain high interest. The agenda for the first meeting consisted of a review of the charge, identification of the purpose of assessment ("to provide school counselors with evidence of their contributions" and "to focus efforts on improving an activity or component of the comprehensive guidance program"). Also discussed was the manner in which the study would proceed.

Learning about Evaluation

A subcommittee was formed to conduct a review of literature related to guidance program evaluation. Another subcommittee was charged with contacting school districts that were attempting to evaluate their guidance programs. These school districts were identified from publications, professional networking, and professional organizations (e.g., the American School Counselor Association and the College Board).

A report outlining the results of the literature review was presented at the second meeting. Among the resources identified as referencing guidance evaluation were 58 journal articles, an ERIC/CASS Special Digest Collection (Schafer, 1995), a special issue on research and evaluation in school counseling published by the American Counseling Association (Gerler, 1990), and a practitioner's guide to evaluating guidance programs (Johnson & Whitfield, 1991). Each resource was examined for practicality of implementation. Committee members came to the consensus that although each publication was well researched and reported, none had a methodology congruent with the culture and common practices of the guidance program in the Omaha Public Schools. Several articles did contribute to determining a direction for evaluation, however (Bloom,1994a, 1994b; Gysbers, Hughey, Starr, & Lapan, 1992; Hughey, Gysbers, & Starr, 1993). Moreover, in recent years, published manuscripts have contained methodology and results that will move our profession closer to determining changes in student behavior and retention of delivered guidance competencies (Burnham & Jackson, 2000; Kaplan, 2000; Lapan, Gysbers, & Sun, 1999; Schlossberg, Morris, & Lieberman, 2001; Trevisan & Hubert, 2001; Zinck & Littrell, 2001). Finally, Henderson and Gysbers (1998) offer a concise description and practical application of comprehensive guidance program concepts in selected school districts across the country.

Some school districts were particularly helpful in this study of evaluation and have remained in a networking partnership. School district representatives exchanged information and learned from each other. Members of the network are the departments of school guidance and counseling in Corpus Christi School District, Des Moines Independent Community School District, Mesa Public Schools, Milwaukee Public Schools, and Tucson Unified School District, as well as the Arizona, Missouri, Ohio, and Utah State Departments of Education. All of these school districts have conducted some means of results-based evaluation and are exchanging information with each other. The sharing of materials, procedures, pilot studies, and documented results remains a vital aspect in determining how our profession can conduct practical, results-based evaluation.

Creating a Framework for Evaluation

The literature review and networking with other school districts offered the committee a direction for their work. The committee's next goal was to draft a framework for measuring student behavior or learning resulting from activities associated with each of the four major components of comprehensive guidance. This framework served as a working document allowing everyone to see the direction for evaluation. Figure 1 depicts the framework used to ensure counselors focused on student results, made distinctions in evaluation, and reported documentation.

Figure 1. Framework for Evaluation

Type of Evaluation Component	
Process Based	
Results Based	
Data-Gathering Document	
I. Guidance Curriculum	
II. Individual Planning	
III. Response Services	
IV. System Support	
V. Program Audit	

The initial recommendation to address one component each year and conduct pilot approaches to assess student and program results for that component proved to be too ambitious. This was true especially for the intermediate evaluation of student learning associated with delivering the guidance curriculum. It was determined that a minimum of three years, perhaps more, was needed for modifying intermediate evaluation measurements and piloting refinements to the measurement and gathering of documentation (Moore, 1999).

Addressing Process-Based and Results-Based Evaluation

Although results-based evaluation was the primary goal, it was decided that process-based evaluation would also be addressed. The committee hoped that using both forms of evaluation would result in a more comprehensive, and perhaps more practical, means of accountability until more could be learned about how to measure guidance program effects on students. In addition, presenting the distinction between process-based and results-based evaluation was a means of educating counselors relative to the primary focus—changes in student behavior

and learning (Molyneaux, 1999). All Omaha Public Schools had reported conducting some form of process-based evaluation resulting in improvements to the school guidance and counseling programs. These process-based measures included the following:

- completion of teaching and delivery guidance curriculum competencies;
- number of guidance lessons/activities;
- increase in the number of individual counseling sessions;
- completion of a career assessment by all students in each grade level (7–12);
- increase in student participation in college admissions test preparation programs;
- increase in the number of small groups offered and student participation in them;
- increase in the number of parent conferences, individual student conferences, home visits, agency contacts, staff conferences, chemical abuse reports, and staff development in-services/presentations; and
- decrease in clerical responsibilities and time devoted to supervision.

These process-based measures indicated apparent improvements in the guidance program, but a means of evaluating actual results remained the primary target. Results-based evaluation demands constant attention. Several schools piloted intermediate results-based evaluation. A sampling of measurements used thus far to determine effectiveness of the comprehensive guidance program and its effects on students include the following:

- evaluation of students' mastery of specified competencies immediately after a guidance lesson is taught (short-term results);
- benchmark evaluation of guidance curriculum competencies using a sample (15%) of students and two competencies in each domain for each K–12 grade level;
- creation of a written career and advanced education plan for each graduating student;
- decrease in students dropping out and not attending alternative educational programs;
- decrease in suspensions and office referrals in those schools (K–12) that have implemented conflict management programs;
- decrease in the number of students who request schedule changes;
- increase in reports of pre-existing child abuse in schools that have elementary school counselors;
- increase in self-esteem as measured by the Piers-Harris Instrument in elementary schools with counselors;
- student, parent, and staff attitudinal surveys administered in elementary schools showing 96% to 98% positive responses to survey items; and

- increase in SAT I and ACT participation and a slight increase in scores of students who participated in a college admissions test preparation program.

The Missouri Model Audit (Gysbers & Henderson, 1994) was used to verify that the same guidance program was delivered in all schools throughout the district. Recently, an audit developed by the Center for Educational Development and the Arizona counselor leadership cadre offers a concise means of monitoring state standards for comprehensive competency-based programs (Lawhead, 2001). A complete description of the evaluation methods and recommended data-gathering documentation can be found in the *Guide for Comprehensive Guidance Program Evaluation and Documents* (Maliszewski, 1994).

District Involvement and Support

Ensuring that counselors from all grade levels were represented on the working committee proved to be a crucial factor in studying results-based evaluation. However, equally valuable was the involvement of district administrators representing the Department of Research and Department of Curriculum and Instruction. When discussing how to evaluate student learning resulting from the guidance curriculum, the coordinator of curriculum and instruction recommended prioritizing two competencies in each domain (personal/social, career/occupational, and academic/educational) for results-based evaluation at each grade level from K to 12. Advisory committee members, students, parents, counselors, teachers, and administrators all provided input regarding which two domain competencies should be assessed at each grade level. (The curriculum contains more than 100 identified competencies at each grade level.)

Computer technology for gathering data, scanning equipment, and materials were made available through the support and cooperation of the Research Department. Another contribution came from the research director, who suggested that intermediate evaluation of a random sample of 15% of all students receiving guidance instruction should be undertaken to demonstrate retention of learning three to five months after the targeted competencies were taught. Furthermore, it was recommended that 80% be set as the criterion for demonstrating mastery. During the first year of piloting this intermediate evaluation, between 47% and 97% of the students in the various schools demonstrated mastery.

Given the high mobility of students in the district, especially at the elementary level, it became apparent that counselors had to agree on specific months when targeted competencies would be delivered and assessed in all the

schools, so that all students throughout the district would learn the same grade-level competencies within the same time frame. Thus, students who transferred between schools within the district could be included in the sample population (Luther, 2001).

Obstacles to results-based evaluation expressed by counselors included lack of time, inadequate training, lack of support, shortage of resources, and concern about how results would be reported and used (Paisley & Hayes, 1997). District administrative support staff helped to educate counselors about evaluation and supported data gathering efforts. Through a reallocation of resources and a streamlining of other responsibilities, one counselor–project assistant ultimately was given the additional duty of assisting with districtwide guidance evaluation. The project assistant was assigned to work out of the district office but devote the majority of time to schools. The assistant's duties included monitoring the assessment process and gathering and reporting all data. (The framework for gathering data is shown in Figure 2.) Efforts were directed at determining results of the delivery of the guidance curriculum competencies, but other components were also assessed during the year. Although each school had a choice of conducting its own evaluation and forwarding the results rather than being evaluated by the project assistant, most counselors were quite relieved that the evaluation process did not add to their already busy schedules.

Figure 2. Framework for Guiding Assessment of Competencies, Student Results, and Gathering of Data (Luther, 2001).

Targeted Competency Standard
Evidence That Standard Was Met
Method of Collecting Evidence
Person (Evaluator) Responsible
Month
Taught
Month
To Be Evaluated
Percentage of Student Mastery

It was determined that the project evaluator would have access to the reported results, and each school would have access only to its own results. Schools were encouraged to use the results for guidance improvement efforts. Because the comprehensive guidance program is in place in all schools, results were reported as aggregate measures reflecting the districtwide guidance and counseling program. Aggregate results were reported throughout the district and summarized in reports to the board of education. This information fostered the sense of teamwork and enthusiasm of K–12 school counselors throughout the district.

In addition, the school district and community became aware of the progress being made toward a well-defined comprehensive school guidance program. Districtwide support was enhanced by program results and took the forms of positive recognition, authorization for additional counselors, and an increase in financial resources for clerical assistance and materials. Although the evaluation process continues to be refined, district personnel and community members seemed impressed that counselors were attempting to evaluate and demonstrate how their program influenced student learning and behavior.

Two counselors were asked to work during the summer to review reported results from the schools and identify more accurate and efficient ways of assessing targeted competencies and other components of the guidance program. Although tremendously time consuming, revising the assessment methods and clarifying data gathering procedures results in an improved evaluation process each year (Molyneaux, 1999). One issue identified was that for effective results-based evaluation to occur, the guidance curriculum competencies must be first written with evaluation in mind.

Recommendations for Pursuing Results-Based Evaluation

Arriving at a practical means of conducting results-based evaluation remains a tremendous challenge for school counselors. Isolating variables in order to obtain valid results that reflect the counselors' contributions is an extremely challenging task (Molyneaux, 1999). In addition, the realities and pressures of working in schools make time a limiting factor.

Enlisting the support of university counselor education faculty in addressing problems and providing insights can add much needed research expertise during the planning stages of the evaluation process. In addition, this experience of consulting with school counselors may encourage counselor educators to their counselor trainees teach practical research skills and methods applicable to results-based evaluation of a comprehensive competency-based guidance program (Paisley & Hayes, 1997). In their professional preparation, it is important for school counselors to learn the value of collaborative action research (Pine, 1981). Learning appropriate uses of surveys, qualitative questionnaires, case studies, needs assessments, pre- and post- tests, and program audits is of practical value given the difficulties of conducting research in K–12 schools (Allen, 1992).

Other lessons learned in the transition toward results-based evaluation include these suggestions:

- Prioritize and measure each target competency as objectively as possible.
- Develop forms that will drive the assessment process and guide the

gathering of data.

- Minimize the amount of time that counselors will need to devote to evaluation.
- Develop a school counselor appraisal guide that corresponds with the comprehensive guidance program.
- Join and communicate with other school districts that are attempting to define and report results.
- It is essential to ask who, what, when, and how questions: What is to be evaluated? When is the evaluation to be done? How is the evaluation to be completed? How are data to be tabulated and reported? How can school counselors ensure that they do not feel threatened by the evaluation process? Who is to participate in the evaluation process?
- Keeping counselors, administrators. and advisory committees well informed of the progress being made and the barriers to overcome is essential.
- Equally important are constant reminders of the primary purpose of results-based evaluation: to "provide evidence as to how students are 'different' as a result of school counselors delivering a comprehensive guidance program" (Molyneaux, 1999).
- We encourage guidance supervisors and other administrators to make committee work fun. Without an element of laughter, a good dose of praise for the counselors who are willing to take risks with a pioneering spirit, nourishing refreshments, a convenient meeting time, and the establishment of a sense of teamwork, counselors could easily become discouraged over the difficulty of such monumental work.
- Ultimate responsibility for the comprehensive guidance program and the evolving system for districtwide delivery and evaluation rests with the guidance program leader (Henderson & Gysbers, 1998).

It is not by chance that the Omaha Public Schools have received national recognition for having a well-defined and successful comprehensive competency-based guidance program. Much thought and insight went into developing a comprehensive competency-based program, creative program implementation occurred, and presently efforts to determine the results of delivering the program are underway. As a direct result of collaborations between counselors, administrators, and community members, we demonstrated that a team approach pays dividends for students.

Determining "how students are 'different' as a result of school counselors delivering a comprehensive competency-based guidance program" remains a challenge. However, with each passing year new methodology has been discovered and generated to make our results-based evaluation increasingly practical, valid, and reliable. Evaluation is a perpetual professional process that

requires taking risks, persevering, and finding answers along the journey but benefits students and engenders a pride in our profession.

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About the Authors

Stan J. Maliszewski is assistant professor and director of the School Counseling and Guidance Program, Department of Educational Psychology, the University of Arizona. At the time of the work described in this article, he was K–12 supervisor of the comprehensive competency-based guidance and counseling program in the Omaha Public Schools, a position he held for 13 years. In the past he has been a high school guidance director, a counselor, and a business education teacher. Additionally, he has consulted for businesses on organizational development and the establishment of succession planning programs. Stan can be reached at smalisze@u.arizona.edu.

John Mackiel, Ph.D., is in his fifth year as superintendent of the Omaha Public Schools, Nebraska. Immediately prior to being named superintendent, he was the secretary of the board of education and chief financial officer for Omaha Public Schools. In Omaha, he has also served as assistant superintendent, held other administrative posts in the Staff Personnel Services Department, and been a secondary school counselor and English teacher. For 20 years he has been an adjunct professor of guidance and counseling, and of educational administration and supervision at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. In addition to his school administration training, he holds a doctorate in community and human resources and a master of arts degree in labor law. John can be reached at Omaha Public Schools, mackielj@ops.org.

Chapter Fourteen

Accountability for Comprehensive Guidance Program Delivery and Quality: *Program Templates*

Sadie Woodard & Benny Malone
Cypress-Fairbanks Independent School District, Houston, Texas

The Cypress-Fairbanks Independent School District (CFISD) in suburban northwest Houston is an extremely fast growing school district. Over the past ten years, the district has grown by 25,000 students. At the start of the 2001–02 school year, 4,000 new students enrolled in CFISD schools. This phenomenal growth has greatly affected every aspect of the district, including the delivery of guidance and counseling services.

The staffing ratio for counselors in CFISD is 400 students per counselor in secondary schools. At the elementary level a formula is used for allocating counselors. For schools with an enrollment of up to 949 students, one counselor is allocated. When a campus reaches 950 students, a half-time counselor is added. A second full-time counselor is added when an elementary campus reaches 1,100 students. We currently have three elementary schools with more than 1,200 students. Although the counselor-to-student ratios are high in comparison to the rates recommended by the American School Counselor Association (i.e., a maximum of 1:300), they are typical of many schools in large, fast growing school districts in Texas.

In 1990, The Texas Education Agency released *A Model Developmental Guidance and Counseling Program for Texas Public Schools*. The agency recommended that Texas schools adopt this model for the design of their school guidance programs. Since 1990 CFISD counselors have been requested to follow the state's recommended model in the design, development, implementation, and evaluation of their school guidance programs.

The Problem

Writing an annual comprehensive developmental guidance program is a huge task. Because we have site-based decision making in CFISD,

personnel in each school identify the needs of that school's students. Building staff members, including counselors, are very involved in developing a Campus Improvement Plan (CIP), which is tied to the district's Annual Goals/Action Plan. We envisioned the writing of a developmental guidance program as part of the CIP process.

However, counselors have shown some reluctance in designing and developing their program from year to year. Time seems always to be the enemy. Counselors would usually prepare a calendar of major activities, and those at the secondary level would assign responsibilities to various counselors. (Because most of our elementary schools have had only one counselor in the building, that individual carried responsibility for all guidance activities.) Although we had advocated that all counselors follow the recommended Texas model, this was not really viewed as a planning process but rather as a paperwork requirement. Many counselors did follow much of what was recommended, but it was difficult to evaluate effectiveness or document what actually was in place. In addition, the model contained recommended percentages for time allocation to particular guidance tasks, but counselors were unable to advocate effectively for a program that more closely matched the recommended percentages because of the difficulty in documenting the current program. Therefore, counselors requested strategies for more efficiently and effectively developing their campus guidance plans.

Our Answer

After informal discussion with several counselors, we came to the conclusion that setting up a common format for writing a program would be helpful. We also determined that the format needed to accomplish the following:

- be user-friendly (few elementary counselors had clerical help);
- allow for individualization among school plans;
- include counselor responsibilities listed in the district's Annual Goals/Action Plan; and
- adhere to all of the recommendations found in the Texas model, which we were committed to implementing to the greatest degree possible.

The idea of using computer templates resulted from several months of planning meetings with guidance counselors. We met with the cluster leaders of elementary counselors and the coordinating counselors for middle schools and high schools in separate meetings. We had four main objectives for the meetings:

1. To get a comprehensive overview of all of the counselors' responsibilities. We knew there would be many similarities, but we

also expected differences due to site-based decision making.

2. To come to consensus on assigning the various tasks contained in the four components of the Texas model—guidance curriculum, responsive services, individual planning, and system support. It was through this step that we could attempt to evaluate whether counselors were devoting the recommended time percentages to each component.
3. To list all of the guidance materials and programs that were used districtwide and all of the topics that were mandated in school district policy and state law, or that were recommended in the Texas model for guidance and counseling programs. This list served to inform counselors about materials with which some may not have been familiar. It also facilitated networking among counselors regarding the myriad of guidance materials available to meet the needs of students.
4. To identify all district goals for which counselors had a responsibility and tie them to components of the Texas model. In other words, we wanted to document that the developmental guidance program for each campus met campus needs, district goals, and Texas model recommendations.

Description of Templates

With Sadie Woodard's assistance, Benny Malone developed the templates, using Microsoft Word. A separate set of templates was developed for each level: elementary, middle school, and high school. The templates are included in a folder on the district's computer network, on the Global drive. Each campus counselor has access to this drive. Through Windows Explorer, the counselor copies the template folder to his or her individual computer system.

Each template set comprises a parallel series of 12 documents with the content modified as appropriate for each level. (See the sample form templates in the chapter appendix.) The content of some documents is the same across all levels; these are the cover page, district goals list, professional counseling staff list, and the caseload assignment lists for the beginning-of-year plan and the end-of-year evaluation. Other documents are specific to the elementary, middle school, or high school level, namely the campus snapshot, guidance curriculum description, responsive services description, individual planning description, system support description, guidance curriculum plan, and the guidance and counseling calendar. The content for these documents was established during the counselor meetings described previously. Each counselor edits these document templates to match his or her specific activities. Some activities may be deleted or added, but on the whole, activities are common to all campuses.

Benefits

Through the process of setting up a standard format, counselors became very familiar with the details of the model. We were able to identify and discuss misconceptions, with the results being that counselors became much more knowledgeable of what a model guidance program should look like. Another beneficial outcome of this process was that we were able to identify gaps in the existing guidance programs of our schools. For example, middle school counselors were engaged in a highly administrative role, and were conducting a minimal amount of classroom guidance or small-group activities. We were also able to document imbalances in the percentages of time allotted to the various components. We saw the need to temper our expectations for our school programs because of the large student-counselor ratio, especially in elementary schools. This caused us to problem solve in a different way. Our counselor committees began to identify other staff on each campus who could assist in implementing various parts of a comprehensive guidance and counseling program. An example of this is our D.A.R.E. programs, which are implemented through the science curriculum and are taught by trained D.A.R.E. officers. This instruction clearly falls under the guidance curriculum component and is presented in every fifth-grade classroom in the district.

In developing the templates, we were able not only to accomplish the goal that we set out to accomplish, but because we had committees representing every campus, we also achieved buy-in from the counseling staff at elementary, middle school, and high school levels. All had a part in designing the master plan.

In addition to outlining the annual activities of a school's developmental guidance program, the set of documents serves as both a training tool and an informational piece for non-counseling staff members, including principals. Therefore, the definition of each of the four components is included at the top of the relevant document, with the recommended percentage of time counselors should spend in that particular component. Using the templates has been a tremendous time-saver for counselors, enabling them to spend more of their time implementing the program and less time designing its presentation.

Conclusion

The feedback from counselors at all levels about using the templates has been very positive. Principals also are pleased to have a documented program on hand to share with other staff when doing annual planning

activities. The central guidance and counseling office can answer questions about a particular campus guidance program with assurance that a strong plan that adheres to state, district, and campus goals is in place. This format has provided our counselors with a structure that allows individualization for each campus, a must for districts with site-based decision making. The mechanics have not been difficult to manage. In fact, a side benefit is that many counselors have strengthened their computer skills!

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About the Authors

Sadie A. Woodard has been director of guidance and counseling in the Cypress-Fairbanks Independent School District, Houston, Texas, for 14 years. Prior to taking her current position, Sadie was a high school assistant principal, counselor, science teacher, and coach. She has been an active leader in the Texas Counseling Association and the Texas Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development. Sadie can be reached at sadie.harris-woodard@cfisd.net or at (281) 897-4054.

Benny K. Malone has been coordinator of guidance and counseling for two years in the Cypress-Fairbanks Independent School District. Earlier in her career, Benny was an elementary counselor and, prior to that, a special education teacher. She can be reached at benny.malone@cfisd.net or at (281) 517-6326.

Template Appendix

147A

DEVELOPMENTAL GUIDANCE PROGRAM

SCHOOL NAME

Prepared by

COUNSELOR (S) / COORDINATING COUNSELOR

DATE

DGP—Cover Page
Cypress-Fairbanks ISD
Guidance and Counseling Dept.
September 2001

Professional Counseling Staff

_____
school name

Counseling Staff*	Education Degree, Major & School	Area of Special Interest/Training/Licensure

*Include all campus counseling staff—e.g., Campus Counselors, Intern, Bilingual Itinerant Counselor, YSS, Special Education Counselor, Psychologist

DGP-Professional Counseling Staff
Cypress-Fairbanks ISD
Guidance and Counseling Dept
September, 2001

Date_____

Middle School Campus Snapshot

_____
school name

Demographics
(Obtain information from Enrollment/Ethnic Recap.)

Enrollment	American Indian	Asian	Black	Hispanic	White	Sp. Ed.	F/R	ESL
Total								
% of enrollment								

Special Programs
(Place "x" for programs on your campus.)

Program	CSRD Grant (AVID)	Life Skills	ESL Block (3 hr. NES class)	Building Better Relationships	Other (List name of program(s) below.)		

Date_____

DEVELOPMENTAL GUIDANCE PROGRAM
Elementary School
Caseload Assignment of Counseling Staff

Beginning-of-the-Year Plan

(List each counselor by name, assignment and activities.)
Counseling Staff*
Title
Grade Level Served
Enrollment
Number of Small Groups Planned
Number of Students to be Served in Small Groups
Number of Guidance Curriculum Presentations Planned
Number of Students to Be Served in Guidance Curriculum Presentations

TOTAL

*Include all campus counseling staff—e.g., Campus Counselors, Intern, Bilingual Itinerant Counselor, YSS, Special Education Counselor, Psychologist

DGP—Elementary Caseload Assignment, Beginning of YearCypress-Fairbanks ISD
Guidance and Counseling Dept.
September 2001

Cypress-Fairbanks Independent School District
Goals and Annual Action Plan, 2001–2002

District Goal 1

Student Progress: Academic Learning and Social/Emotional Development

- Students' academic performance and achievement level will reflect excellence in learning and attainment of both high expectations and high standards.
- Students' behavior will exemplify the skills, attitudes, and/or practices characteristic of productive, community-minded adults: citizenship, self-esteem, respect for others, accountability for actions, and healthful lifestyles.

Curricular Objectives

Produce graduates who have experienced full access to a challenging, enriched, TEKS-based curriculum.

1. Challenge all students by providing them a well-balanced, rich curriculum with appropriate learning experiences based on the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS).
2. Ensure that students, no matter which campus they attend, receive the same curriculum as detailed in the District's academic standards for language arts/reading, mathematics, science, and social studies.
3. Enroll students in appropriately challenging courses, particularly in mathematics and science, by adhering to well-thought-out placement criteria and procedures.
4. Maintain high expectations for students—that they will demonstrate exemplary performance in their reading and writing of the English language and in their understanding of mathematics, science, and social studies.

"Portrait" Objectives

Develop in students the competencies identified in the "Portrait of a CFISD Graduate": effective communicator, competent problem solver, self-directed learner, responsible citizen, and quality producer.

Effective Communicator

5. Improve students' communication skills by providing instruction in listening, speaking reading, and writing, including the use of standard grammar, language conventions, and vocabulary precision and richness.
6. Ensure students' literacy by making certain that all students can read on grade level or above by the end of third grade and every year thereafter.
7. Expand students' language skills by providing opportunities for foreign language instruction at the elementary level.
8. Add dimension to students' learning environment by promoting the use of technology as a tool.

DGP—District Goals
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Competent Problem Solver

9. Develop and refine students' problem-solving and critical/creative-thinking skills by extending the depth and complexity of lessons.
10. Ensure students' mathematical competence by making certain that they reach or exceed grade-level math standards by the end of third grade and every year thereafter.

Self-directed Learner

11. Ensure students' academic success by equipping them with on-grade- level or higher study skills.
12. Enable secondary students to maximize credit-earning opportunities by providing information to students and their parents about four-year plans, required and elective courses, and high-school-credit courses offered during middle school.
13. Maximize students' time in their regularly scheduled classes by monitoring co-curricular and extracurricular activities and enforcing participation guidelines while considering the benefits that such activities can provide for students.
14. Help students plan for life beyond graduation by providing college counseling and career guidance.

Responsible Citizen

15. Help students gain an understanding of, acceptance of, and appreciation for diversity, and expect them to treat others with dignity and respect.
16. Prepare students to lead productive lives in the 21st century by cultivating worldwide awareness and multicultural understanding.
17. Equip students to become productive, contributing adult citizens and workers by developing and refining their self-discipline and sense of responsibility.
18. Maximize the student completion rate by reducing the number of students who drop out of school (psychological as well as physical dropouts).
19. Increase student attendance by studying the causes of absenteeism, finding ways to address these problems, and implementing targeted strategies.
20. Foster students' physical and emotional fitness by encouraging them to form good habits and adopt healthful practices.
21. Instill in students the importance of remaining drug-free by providing effective and appropriate instruction about the hazards of substance abuse.

Quality Producer

22. Close the achievement gap between at-risk and non-at-risk students by elevating expectations of their performance, accelerating their academic growth, and varying the strategies used in their instruction.
23. Improve the academic outcomes of students in special populations (such as limited English proficient, gifted/talented, and special education) by strengthening the curricula designed to meet their needs.
24. Accommodate learners' needs through the use of flexible grouping, particularly in subject areas that invite vertical acceleration for students with special aptitudes.
25. Prepare learners for real-world pursuits by ensuring that teachers understand and convey to students and their parents the specific connections between classroom activities/topics and job skills/knowledge.

Counselor Activities

(This list pairs the counselor activities stated in the *CFISD Goals and Annual Action Plan, 2001–2002* with the state-recommended guidance and counseling program components: Guidance Curriculum, Responsive Services, Individual Planning, and System Support. In order to formulate a comprehensive developmental guidance program for an elementary or secondary campus, the counseling staff incorporates both district goals and state components.)

1. Curricular Objective, Activity #6 (Individual Planning, E/S)

Promote students' placement into appropriately challenging courses that provide vertical acceleration by continuing to review, revise, and monitor District placement criteria and procedures.

a. Implement a vertical acceleration program in mathematics that meets District criteria for advancement in grades 1–5.

b. Minimize the number of drops from Algebra 1 during the first six weeks of 8th grade by identifying student needs and adjusting instruction accordingly.

2. Curricular Objective, Activity #7 (System Support, E/S)

Keep students and parents informed about advanced-placement and credit-by-exam opportunities.

3. Curricular Objective, Activities #8 (Individual Planning, S)

Improve ninth-grade student success by continuing to use many of the strategies implemented through the ACCESS Graduation grant.

4. Portrait Objective, Competent Problem Solver, Activity #11 (Guidance Curriculum, E/S)

Encourage students to participate in activities beyond the classroom that promote higher-level thinking and problem-solving competencies. Some examples are listed below.

a. Co-curricular: UIL competitions, science exhibits, History Fair

b. Extracurricular: Destination ImagiNation, Science Olympiad, math contests

c. Social/emotional: peer mediation, PALS, Teen Leadership, mentoring, anger management counseling groups, Teen Court, D.A.R.E., and Skills for Adolescence

5. Portrait Objective, Self-directed Learner, Activity #8 (System Support, S)

Maximize students' opportunities to earn high school credits during middle school by clarifying the District's philosophy regarding this issue.

6. Portrait Objective, Self-directed Learner, Activity #10 (System Support, S)

Continue updating and providing students and parents with guidance/counseling publications for use in developing four-year plans and planning for college and careers. Examples:

- Information regarding local advanced-placement, College Board AP courses, credit-by-exam, and dual-credit opportunities
- Internet and web sites for colleges
- Information on college admissions and financial aid opportunities (e.g., the "TEXAS" and "Teach for Texas" grant programs)
- Individual transition planning for students with disabilities
- Other transitional guidance materials

7. Portrait Objective, Self-directed Learner, Activity #11 (System Support, S)

Encourage students and their parents to set educational goals by publicizing and distributing information related to the four-year planning process and college and career planning. Examples:

- Middle school and high school transition meetings (*Keeping the Options Open*)
- Television announcements in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese
- Information on CFISD web site
- Transition planning brochure for students with disabilities

8. Portrait Objective, Self-directed Learner, Activity #12 (Individual Planning, S)

Promote secondary students' understanding of the connection between education and career success through

a. TEKS-driven classroom activities with real-world focus and

b. Implementation of the individual planning component ("career focus" portion) of the *Development Guidance Program.*

9. Portrait Objective, Self-directed Learner, Activity #14 (System Support, S)

Ask students to rate the District's success in preparing them for life beyond high school.

a. Administer the Life Track Exit survey to all graduating seniors, analyze the results, and identify trends.

b. Continue following up on the study of graduates who have become productive employees, and determine what role the schools may have played in those students' attainment of career success.

10. Portrait Objective, Responsible Citizen, Activity #4 (Individual Planning, S)

Identify students who have fallen behind their peers, and address their individual needs by implementing alternative ways of delivering instruction and services and/or allowing them to earn credit and accelerate their progress in school (e.g., Windfern High School, advanced placement, credit-by-exam).

11. Portrait Objective, Responsible Citizen, Activity #6 (Responsive Services, E/S)

Reach students who struggle with developing self-discipline and responsibility by implementing non-traditional interventions (e.g., conflict resolution, peer mediation, in-school tribunal, teen court, small-group counseling, seminars on character development and leadership).

12. Portrait Objective, Responsible Citizen, Activity #7 (Guidance Curriculum, E/S)

Develop positive behaviors in students through continued implementation and evaluation of programs such as Boys Town (Building Better Relationships), the Developmental Guidance Program, and Safe and Drug-free Schools (PALS, DARE, and GREAT), and Teen Leadership.

13. Portrait Objective, Responsible Citizen, Activity #9 (Guidance Curriculum, E/S)

Help students to develop an appreciation for diversity.

a. Enhance multiethnic understanding through continued participation in the Teen Summit on Race Relations.
b. Promote districtwide collaboration of students through the superintendent's high school and middle school Student Leadership Program groups.
c. Provide opportunities for students to discuss the importance of understanding and accepting others.

14. Portrait Objective, Quality Producer, Activity #14 (Individual Planning, S)

Ensure academic success for 9th-grade students.

a. Provide incoming 9th graders with summer programs (e.g., summer academies, including Algebridge).
b. Ensure that 9th graders earn at least 5 credits (and become 10th graders).

15. Portrait Objective, Quality Producer, Activity #21 (System Support, E/S)

Improve special education students' programs and learning outcomes by implementing the District's plan of action for improvement (i.e., the CAP) and updating each campus's progress in the following areas.

a. least restrictive environment;
b. related services;
c. timelines for initial evaluation;
d. timelines for re-evaluation; and
e. transition services

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DEVELOPMENTAL GUIDANCE PROGRAM

Guidance Curriculum

The purpose of the Guidance Curriculum component is to help all students develop basic life skills. The curriculum has a scope and sequence for student competency development and is taught in units with planned lessons.
State-recommended percentage, Middle School = 35% to 40%

In the area of Guidance Curriculum, the counselors at_____ will:
(school name)

1. Teach the developmental guidance curriculum in units with planned lessons for small or classroom-sized groups of students at all grade levels.
2. Plan and present lessons on the following topics:
    - Self-confidence Development
    - Motivation to Achieve
    - Decision-making, Goal-setting, Planning, and Problem-solving Skills
    - Interpersonal Effectiveness
    - Communication Skills
    - Cross-cultural Effectiveness
    - Responsible Behavior
3. Identify appropriate resources and materials necessary for presenting the guidance curriculum.
4. Collaborate with, and provide assistance to, other school team members (especially teachers) who may integrate the guidance topics with other curricula.
5. Assist teachers in instructing students on how to interpret and utilize the results from the 8th-grade Career Planning Survey.
6. Coordinate classroom and small-group guidance lessons with campus and district goals.
7. Prepare a monthly calendar of guidance curriculum activities that includes:
    - The topics/programs presented
    - The grade level receiving the presentation
    - The format of the presentation (classroom session or small group activity)
    - Lesson presenter (counselor, campus staff or other person)

DGP—Guidance Curriculum, Middle School
Cypress-Fairbanks ISD
Guidance and Counseling Dept.
September 2001

Sample

Elementary Guidance Curriculum Plan

Suggested Topics/Programs	Recommended Grade Level	Guidance Curriculum Area Addressed *
DUSO	PK, K, 1	ABCDEFG
Kelso	2,3,4	ABCDEFG
Building Better Relationships	All	ABCDEFG
Be Cool Series	4,5	ABCDEFG
Get Along Series	PK, K, 1, 2	ABCDEG
Stick Up for Yourself	4,5	ABCDEFG
DARE	5	ABCDEFG
GREAT	4	ABCDEFG
PALS	3, 4, 5	ABCDEFG
ROPES	4,5	ABCDEG
WHO	1,4	ACEG
Anger Control	All	CDEG
Bullying/Teasing	All	ABCDEFG
Conflict Resolution	All	ACDEG
Cross Cultural Effectiveness	All	BCDEF
Drug Awareness	All	ACEG
Growth & Development	5	ACG
Meet the Counselor	All	CE
Middle School Transition	5	ABCG
Social Skills	All	ABCDEFG
Test taking/Study Skills	2,3,4,5	ABCG
Violence Prevention	3,4,5	ABCDEFG

***Guidance Curriculum Areas**

The following topics should be included in the Developmental Guidance Program recommended by TEA.

A. Self-confidence Development
B. Motivation to Achieve
C. Decision-making, Goal-setting, Planning and Problem-solving Skills
D. Interpersonal Effectiveness
E. Communication Skills
F. Cross Cultural Effectiveness
G. Responsible Behavior

District Goal Addressed Through Guidance Curriculum

Goal 1, Portrait Objectives

Competent Problem-solver, Activity 11
Encourage students to participate in activities beyond the classroom which promote higher-level thinking and problem-solving competencies. Some examples are listed below.

- *(a) Co-curricular: UIL competitions, science exhibits, History Fair*
- *(b) Extracurricular: Destination ImagiNation, Science Olympiad, math contests*
- *(c) Social/emotional: peer mediation, PALS, Teen Leadership, mentoring, anger management counseling groups, Teen Court, DARE, and Skills for Adolescence*

Responsible Citizen, Activity 7
Develop positive behaviors in students through continued implementation and evaluation programs such as Boys Town (Building Better Relationships), the Developmental Guidance Program, and Safe and Drug-free Schools (PALS, DARE, and GREAT), and Teen Leadership.

Responsible Citizen, Activity 9
Help students to develop an appreciation for diversity.

- *(a) Enhance multiethnic understanding through continued participation in the Teen Summit on Race Relations.*
- *(b) Promote districtwide collaboration of students through the Superintendent's high school and middle school Student Leadership Program groups*
- *(c) Provide opportunities for students to discuss the importance of understanding and accepting others.*

DGP-Sample Guidance Curriculum Plan, Elementary
Cypress-Fairbanks ISD
Guidance and Counseling Dept.
September, 2001

Sample

High School Guidance Curriculum Plan

Suggested Topics/Programs	Recommended Grade Level	Guidance Curriculum Area Addressed *	District Goal Addressed Through Guidance Curriculum
AAS-4yr. Plan Presentation	8, 9	BCG	**Goal 1, Portrait Objectives**
Alcohol Ed. Program (ALC)	6-12	ACBG	**Competent Problem-solver, Activity 11**
Anger Control	All	CDBG	*Encourage students to participate in activities beyond the classroom which promote higher-level thinking and problem-solving competencies. Some examples are listed below.*
Building Better Relationships	All	ABCDEFG	*(a) Co-curricular: UIL competitions, science exhibits, History Fair*
Conflict Res./Peer Mediation	All	ACDEFG	*(b) Extracurricular: Destination ImagiNation, Science Olympiad, math contests*
Cross Cultural Effectiveness	All	BCDEF	*(c) Social/emotional: peer mediation, PALS, Teen Leadership, mentoring, anger management counseling groups, Teen Court, DARE, and Skills for Adolescence.*
Drug Awareness	9, 10	ACEG	
Harassment	All	ABCDEFG	**Responsible Citizen, Activity 7**
Leadership Skills	All	ABCDEG	*Develop positive behaviors in students through continued implementation and evaluation programs such as Boys Town (Building Better Relationships), the Developmental Guidance Program, and Safe and Drug-free Schools (PALS, DARE, and GREAT), and Teen Leadership.*
Meet the Counselor	All	CE	
Red Ribbon Week	All	ACEG	**Responsible Citizen, Activity 9**
ROPES	All	ABCDEG	*Help students to develop an appreciation for diversity.*
Safety Awareness	All	ACDEFG	*(a) Enhance multiethnic understanding through continued participation in the Teen Summit on Race Relations.*
Student Orientation	All	CG	*(b) Promote districtwide collaboration of students through the Superintendent's high school and middle school Student Leadership Program groups*
Suicide, Crisis Prevention	9,10	ACE	*(c) Provide opportunities for students to discuss the importance of understanding and accepting others.*
Teen Summit Interethnic Forum	All	CDEF	
Test Taking/Study Skills	10, 11	ABCG	
WHO	9, 10	ACEG	

***Guidance Curriculum Areas**

The following topics should be included in the Developmental Guidance Program recommended by TEA.

A. Self-confidence Development
B. Motivation to Achieve
C. Decision-making, Goal-setting, Planning and Problem-solving Skills
D. Interpersonal Effectiveness
E. Communication Skills
F. Cross Cultural Effectiveness
G. Responsible Behavior

DGP-Sample Guidance Curriculum Plan, High School
Cypress-Fairbanks ISD
Guidance and Counseling Dept.
September, 2001

DEVELOPMENTAL GUIDANCE PROGRAM

Responsive Services

This is an ongoing daily responsibility in which the counselor intervenes on behalf of those students whose immediate personal concerns or problems put their continued personal-social, career, and/or educational development at risk.
State-recommended percentages, High School = 25% to 35%

In the area of Responsive Services, the counselors at _____ will:
(school name)

1. Provide consultation through conferences, phone calls and individual meetings to:
    - Teachers
    - Parents
    - Administrators
    - Psychologist
    - Diagnostician
    - Nurse
    - Youth Service Specialist
    - Other professionals
2. Locate appropriate resources for referrals to community services.
3. Facilitate and/or assist other campus staff in making referrals to Children's Protective Services and respond to requests for information from Children's Protective Services.
4. Serve as a member of the campus crisis intervention team.
5. Conduct small-group counseling sessions on various topics, such as:
    - Self-esteem
    - Retention
    - Building and Maintaining Positive Personal Relationships
    - Anger Management
    - Grief and Loss
    - Divorce
    - Social Skills
    - Goal Setting for Academic and Career Aspirations
    - Special Needs
6. Meet with students for individual counseling on an as-needed or limited basis to address school adjustment issues and assess student needs for additional intervention from school, home, or community services.
7. Support the development and implementation of campus mentoring programs.
8. Provide booklets and brochures on topics of interest to parents and students.

DGP—Responsive Services, High School
Cypress-Fairbanks ISD
Guidance and Counseling Dept.
September 2001

DEVELOPMENTAL GUIDANCE PROGRAM
Individual Planning

This is an ongoing daily responsibility in which the counselor guides all students as they plan, monitor, and manage their own educational, career, and personal-social development.
State-recommended percentage, Middle School = 15% to 25%

In the area of Individual Planning, the counselors at _____ will:
(school name)

1. Serve as members of the campus At Risk Committee.
2. Provide parent consultation regarding student needs at new student registration.
3. Provide consultation to parents regarding student progress as needed throughout the year.
4. Provide consultation to students regarding academic matters (e.g., credit-by-exam, four-year plans, summer school placement, course selection and scheduling, Duke Talent Search program).
5. Provide consultation to teachers regarding student concerns.
6. Assist with the completion of behavior rating scales as requested.
7. Maintain accurate, up-to-date student records of testing and identification for special programs (special education, 504, dyslexia).
8. Process referrals for special education including:
    - Chairing the referral committee meeting
    - Attending staffings
    - Chairing and/or attending ARDs
9. Interpret assessment data and test results and consult with parents, students and school staff in order to assist in formulating realistic goals for students (TAAS; career planning survey; special program testing.)
10. At the principal's discretion, serve on the dyslexia identification committee.
11. At the principal's discretion, coordinate the 504 committee.
12. Assist students in making applications for special programs and schools.
13. Assist with completing individual TAAS interviews.
14. Prepare a monthly calendar of individual planning activities which includes:
    - At Risk Committee meetings
    - Course selection and scheduling timelines
    - Individual student four-year planning conference timelines
    - New student registration

DGP—Individual Planning, Middle School
Cypress-Fairbanks ISD
Guidance and Counseling Dept.
September 2001

DEVELOPMENTAL GUIDANCE PROGRAM

System Support

The System Support component consists of services and management activities which indirectly benefit students and are required to assure the delivery of a high quality guidance program.
State-recommended percentage, Elementary = 10% to 15%

In the area of System Support, the counselors at _____ will:
(school name)

1. Plan, organize, and ensure implementation of the campus-wide developmental guidance program.
2. Participate in and contribute to district and campus leadership teams including:
    - Campus administrative team
    - Counselor meetings and committees
    - Cluster meetings
    - Vertical team meetings
3. At principal's discretion, serve as member of CPOC.
4. Support campus programs and special events.
5. Contribute articles to the campus newsletter regarding activities and services of the guidance and counseling program.
6. Provide staff development at campus and district levels that furthers knowledge and understanding of the guidance and counseling program.
7. Provide parenting education programs at campus and district levels.
8. Serve as campus TAAS coordinator.
9. At principal's discretion, coordinate other campus standardized testing programs (GT, second-grade testing, bilingual/ESL).
10. Continue to enhance personal professional development by attending conferences and workshops.
11. Assist campus staff as part of the PEIMS data quality assurance team by maintaining accurate counseling records for all students in special programs (special education, GT, bilingual/ESL).
12. Prepare a monthly calendar of system support activities which include:
    - Standardized testing schedule
    - Professional development activities
    - Conference attendance
    - Campus support activities
    - Parent education programs

DGP—System Support, Elementary
Cypress-Fairbanks ISD
Guidance and Counseling Dept.
September 2001

DEVELOPMENTAL GUIDANCE PROGRAM

System Support

The System Support component consists of services and management activities which indirectly benefit students and are required to assure the delivery of a high quality guidance program.
State-recommended percentage, High School = 15% to 20%

In the area of System Support, the counselors at _____ will:
(school name)

1. Plan, organize, and ensure implementation of the campus-wide Developmental Guidance Program.
2. Participate in and contribute to district and campus leadership teams including:
   - Campus administrative team
   - Counselor meetings and committees
   - Cluster meetings
   - Vertical team meetings
3. At principal's discretion, serve as member of CPOC.
4. Support campus programs and special events.
5. Contribute articles to the campus newsletter regarding activities and services of the guidance and counseling program.
6. Provide staff development at campus and district levels which furthers knowledge and understanding of the guidance and counseling program.
7. Provide parenting education programs at campus and district levels.
8. Serve as campus TAAS coordinator.
9. Assist in coordinating other campus standardized and field-testing programs (credit-by-exam; college entrance exams including PSAT, SAT I, ACT, and College Board AP testing; RPTE; special education alternative testing).
10. Consult with teachers in instructing students on how to interpret and utilize the results from the Career Planning Survey.
11. Continue to enhance personal professional development by attending conferences and workshops.
12. Assist campus staff as part of the PEIMS data quality assurance team by maintaining accurate counseling records for all students in special programs (special education, At Risk).
13. Prepare a monthly calendar of system support activities which includes:
    - Standardized testing schedule
    - Professional development activities
    - Conference attendance
    - Campus support activities
    - Parent education programs

DGP—System Support, High School
Cypress-Fairbanks ISD
Guidance and Counseling Dept.
September 2001

Sample Calendar-Items in **Bold** are required as listed. Schedule all other activities according to campus needs

Elementary Guidance and Counseling Calendar

Month	All Levels	PreK	K	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
July	**New Student Registration (IP)**							
August	**Counselor Inservice (SS)** **New Student Registration (IP)** **RS- ongoing** Meet the Counselor (cC) Building Better Relationships (BBR) (cT) **Credit-by-Exam notice (IP)** **GT New-to-District (IP)** **LEP screening/LPAC (IP)** Teacher Inservice (SS) Open House (SS)				Retention (gC)	Retention (gC)	Retention (gC)	Retention (gC)
September	**RS-ongoing** **Write DGP (SS)** Plan & schedule groups/cl guidance (C) Meet the Counselor (cC) BBR (cT) **Credit-by-Exam notice (IP)** **GT New-to-District (IP)** **LEP screening/LPAC (IP)** At Risk Committee (IP) Curriculum Night (SS) Common Sense Parenting (SS) **MAC Study (SS)**							
October	**RS-ongoing** BBR (cT) **Red Ribbon Wk. (cT)** **Parent Conference Day (IP)** **LEP screening/LPAC (IP)** Common Sense Parenting (SS)	DUSO (cC)	DUSO (cC)	DUSO (cC) WHO (cC)	Kelso (cC) Divorce (gC)	Divorce (gC) Conflict Res. (gC)	Divorce (gC) Conflict Res. (gC)	Conflict Res. (gC) Growth & Dev. (cO)

* KEY
C- Guidance Curriculum by Counseling Staff
T- Guidance Curriculum by Teacher
O- Guidance Curriculum by Other (DARE Officer, Nurse, etc.)
RS-Responsive Services (consultation, community referrals, crisis intervention, individual counseling)
IP- Individual Planning
SS –System Support
c-Classroom Session
g-Small Group Session

Sample Calendar-Items in **Bold** are required as listed. Schedule all other activities according to campus needs

November	**RS-ongoing** BBR (cT) **LEP screening/LPAC (IP)** At Risk Committees (IP) **GT Nominations Notice (IP)** TCA Conference (SS) **MAC Study (SS)**	DUSO (cC)	DUSO (cC)	DUSO (cC)	Kelso (cC) Divorce (gC)	Divorce (gC) Conflict Res. (gC)	Divorce (C) Conflict Res. (gC) ROPES (cO)	Divorce (gC) Conflict Res. (gC)
December	**RS-ongoing** Cross cultural awareness (cC) BBR (cT) **LEP screening/LPAC (IP)** **GT Nominations Due (IP)**				Divorce (gC)	Divorce (gC)	Divorce(gC) ROPES (cO)	Divorce (gC)
January	**RS-ongoing** BBR (cT) **LEP screening/LPAC (IP)** At Risk Committees (IP) Mentoring Staff Dev. (SS)		**In-building GT screening (IP)**		Getting Along (gC)	Kelso (cC) Anger mgmt. (gC)	WHO (cC) ROPES (cO) GREAT (cO)	DARE (cO) Anger mgmt. (gC)
February	**RS-ongoing** BBR (cT) Drug Awareness (cO) **LEP screening/LPAC (IP)** **MAC Study (SS)**		**GT notification (IP)**		**Assist with standardized testing (SS)**		ROPES (cO) GREAT (cO) **TAAS Writing (SS)**	DARE (cO)
March	**RS-ongoing** BBR (cT) Drug Awareness (cO) Bullying/Teasing (cC) **LEP screening/LPAC (IP)** At Risk Committees (IP)			**In-building GT screening (IP)**		Test taking skills (cC) **In-building GT screening (IP)**	ROPES (cO) GREAT (cO) **ISC 4/5 GT screening (IP)**	DARE (cO) **ISC 4/5 GT screening (IP)**
April	**RS-ongoing** BBR (cT) Drug Awareness (cO) **LEP screening/LPAC (IP)** **MAC Study (SS)**			**In-building GT screening (IP)**		**In-building GT screening (IP)** **TAAS Rdg. & Math (SS)**	ROPES (cO) GREAT (cO) **TAAS Rdg. & Math (SS)**	DARE (cO) **MS transition (cC)** **TAAS Rdg. & Math (SS)**

*** KEY**

C- Guidance Curriculum by Counseling Staff
T- Guidance Curriculum by Teacher
O- Guidance Curriculum by Other (DARE Officer, Nurse, etc.)
RS-Responsive Services (consultation, community referrals, crisis intervention, individual counseling)
IP- Individual Planning
SS –System Support
c-Classroom Session
g-Small Group Session

Sample Calendar-Items in **Bold** are required as listed. Schedule all other activities according to campus needs

May	**RS-ongoing** **BBR (cT)Drug awareness (cO)** **End-of-Year LPAC (IP)** **Credit-by-Exam notice (IP)** **GT Summer Testing notice (IP)** **TEA Conference (SS)**			**GT notification (IP)**	**GT notification (IP)**	**GT notification (IP)** **TAAS info to Parents (SS)**	GREAT (cO) **GT notification (IP)** **TAAS info to Parents (SS)**	DARE (cO) **MS transition (cC)** **CT notification (IP)** **TAAS info to Parents (SS)**
June	**Guidance Program Evaluation (SS)**							

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* KEY

C- Guidance Curriculum by Counseling Staff
T- Guidance Curriculum by Teacher
O- Guidance Curriculum by Other (DARE Officer, Nurse, etc.)
RS-Responsive Services (consultation, community referrals, crisis intervention, individual counseling)
IP- Individual Planning
SS –System Support
c-Classroom Session
g-Small Group Session

Sample Calendar-Items in **Bold** are required as listed. Schedule all other activities according to campus needs

Middle School Guidance and Counseling Calendar

Month	All levels	6th	7th	8th
July	**Counselor Inservice (SS)** **New Student Registration (IP)**			
August	**RS-ongoing** Meet the Counselor(cC) Building Better Relationships (BBR) (cT) Harassment, Teasing (cC) Peer Mediation (gC) **Orientation (cC)** **Credit-by-Exam notice (IP)** **Course Selection & Scheduling (IP)** **Master Schedule Adj. (SS)** Teacher Inservice (SS) Open House (SS)	GREAT (cO)		Career Pl. Survey (cT) DARE (cO)
September	**RS-ongoing** **Write DGP (SS)** BBR (cT) Plan and schedule groups and classroom guidance (C) **Course Selection & Scheduling (IP)** At Risk Committees (IP) Curriculum Night (SS) **MAC Study (SS)**			ROPES (gO) **4-year Plan Conferences (IP)**
October	**RS-ongoing** BBR (cT) **Red Ribbon Wk. (cT)** **Counselor Inservice (SS)** Common Sense Parenting (SS)			Theater Arts Drug Play (cT)

*KEY
C-Guidance Curriculum by Counselor
T-Guidance Curriculum by Teacher
O-Guidance Curriculum by Other (DARE Officer, Nurse, etc.)
RS-Responsive Services (consultation, community referrals, crisis intervention, individual counseling)
IP-Individual Planning
SS-System Support
c-Classroom Session
g-Small Group Session

*-Sample Calendar, Middle School
ress-Fairbanks ISD
dance and Counseling Dept.
tember, 2001

Sample Calendar-Items in **Bold** are required as listed. Schedule all other activities according to campus needs

November	**RS-ongoing** BBR (cT) At Risk Group (gC) At Risk Committees (IP) TAAS Interviews (IP) **TCA Conference (SS)** **MAC Study (SS)**		**Duke Talent Search (IP)**	
December	**RS-ongoing** BBR (cT) **Course Selection & Scheduling (IP)** TAAS Interviews (IP)		**Duke Talent Search (IP)**	4 Yr. Plans (cC)
January	**RS-ongoing** **Course Selection & Scheduling (IP)** BBR (cT) TAAS Interviews (IP) At Risk Committees (IP)	Latch-key Program (cC) Relationships (gC)	Relationships (gC) Child Lures (cC)	
February	**RS-ongoing** **Course Selection & Scheduling (IP)** BBR (cT) **MAC Study (SS)**		WHO (cC)	**TAAS Writing (SS)**
March	**RS-ongoing** **Course Selection & Scheduling (IP)** BBR (cT) At Risk Committees (IP)	Elem. Mtg. for 5th to 6th (SS)	WHO (cC)	
April	**RS-ongoing** BBR (cT) **TAAS Rdg. & Math (SS)** **MAC Study (SS)**			**High School Transition (cC)**

***KEY**
C-Guidance Curriculum by Counselor
T-Guidance Curriculum by Teacher
O-Guidance Curriculum by Other (DARE Officer, Nurse, etc.)
RS-Responsive Services (consultation, community referrals, crisis intervention, individual counseling)
IP-Individual Planning
SS-System Support
c-Classroom Session
g-Small Group Session

*-Sample Calendar, Middle School
ress-Fairbanks ISD
dance and Counseling Dept
tember, 2001

Sample Calendar-Items in **Bold** are required as listed. Schedule all other activities according to campus needs

May	**RS-ongoing** BBR (cT) **Credit-by-Exam Notice (IP)** **Summer School Conf. (IP)** **TAAS info to Parents (SS)**			**High School Transition (eC)**
June	**Guidance Program Evaluation (SS)**			

***KEY**

C-Guidance Curriculum by Counselor
T-Guidance Curriculum by Teacher
O-Guidance Curriculum by Other (DARE Officer, Nurse, etc.)
RS-Responsive Services (consultation, community referrals, crisis intervention, individual counseling)
IP-Individual Planning
SS-System Support
c-Classroom Session
g-Small Group Session

P-Sample Calendar, Middle School
ross-Fairbanks ISD
dance and Counseling Dept
tember, 2001

Sample Calendar-Items in **Bold** are required as listed. Schedule all other activities according to campus needs

High School Guidance and Counseling Calendar

Month	All levels*	9th	10th	11th	12th
July	**Counselor Inservice (SS)** **New Student Registration (IP)**		**Exit Level TAAS (SS)**	**Exit Level TAAS (SS)**	**Exit Level TAAS (SS)**
August	**RS-ongoing** Meet the Counselor (cC) Building Better Relationships (BBR) (cT) **Credit-by-Exam notice (IP)** **Course Selection and Scheduling (IP)** **Review Transcripts (IP)** **Summer School Report Card Check (IP)** **Master Schedule Adj. (SS)** Teacher Inservice (SS) Open House (SS)				
September	**RS-ongoing** **Write DGP (SS)** BBR (cT) Plan and schedule groups and classroom guidance (C) Leadership Skills (gC) Peer Mediation Tr. (gC) Alcohol Ed.-ALC (gC) **Course Selection and Scheduling (IP)** At Risk Committees (IP) **MAC Study (SS)**	**4-year Plan Conferences (IP)**		**Student/Parent Guide to College (cC)**	Senior Conf. (IP)

***KEYS**
C-Guidance Curriculum by Counseling Staff
T-Guidance Curriculum by Teacher
O-Guidance Curriculum by Other (DARE Officer, Nurse, etc.)
RS-Responsive Services (consultation, community referrals, crisis intervention, individual counseling)
IP-Individual Planning
SS-System Support
c-Classroom Session
g-Small Group Session

Sample Calendar-Items in Bold are required as listed. Schedule all other activities according to campus needs

October	**RS-ongoing** **BBR (cT)** **Red Ribbon Wk. (cT)** Counselor Inservice (SS)	WHO (cC) Suicide/Crisis Prev. (cC)	WHO (cC) Suicide/Crisis Prev. (cC) **PSAT (SS)**	**Exit Level TAAS (SS)** **SAT I&II (SS)** **ACT (SS)** **College/Career Night (IP)**	**Exit Level TAAS (SS)** **SAT I&II (SS)** **ACT (SS)** **College/Career Night (IP)**
November	**RS-ongoing** **BBR (cT)** **Financial Aid Workshop (IP)** **TCA Conference (SS)** At Risk Committee (IP) **MAC Study (SS)**		**Career Planning Survey (IP)**	**SAT I&II (SS)** **ACT (SS)**	**SAT I&II (SS)** **ACT (SS)**
December	**RS-ongoing** **BBR (cT)** Teen Summit Interethnic Forum (gT) **Course Selection & Scheduling (IP)**			**SAT I&II (SS)** **ACT (SS)**	**SAT I&II (SS)** **ACT (SS)**
January	**RS-ongoing** **BBR (cT)** Teen Summit Interethnic Forum (gT) **New Student Registration (IP)** **Course Selection & Scheduling (IP)** **Master Schedule Adj. (SS)** At Risk Committee (IP)			**SAT I (SS)**	**SAT I (SS)** **Graduation Transcript Review (IP)**

***KEYS**
C-Guidance Curriculum by Counseling Staff
T-Guidance Curriculum by Teacher
O-Guidance Curriculum by Other (DARE Officer, Nurse, etc.)
RS-Responsive Services (consultation, community referrals, crisis intervention, individual counseling)
IP-Individual Planning
SS-System Support
c-Classroom Session
g-Small Group Session

P-Sample Calendar, High School
ross-Fairbanks ISD
dance and Counseling Dept
tember, 2001

Sample Calendar-Items in **Bold** are required as listed. Schedule all other activities according to campus needs

February	**RS-ongoing** **Course Selection & Scheduling (IP)** **BBR (cT)** **MAC Study (SS)**	**Keeping Options Open (IP)**	**Exit Level TAAS (SS)**	**Exit Level TAAS (SS)** **ACT (SS)**	**Exit Level TAAS (SS)** **ACT (SS)**
March	**RS-ongoing** **BBR (cT)** **RPTE testing (SS)** **TEA HS Conf. (SS)** **Course Selection & Scheduling (IP)** At Risk Committee (IP)	WHO (cC)	WHO (cC)	**SAT I (SS)**	**SAT I (SS)**
April	**RS-ongoing** **BBR (cT)** **TACAC Conf. (SS)** **MAC Study (SS)**	WHO (cC)	WHO (cC) **Exit Level TAAS (SS)**	**Job Fair (IP)** **ACT (SS)** **Exit Level TAAS (SS)**	**Job Fair (IP)** **ACT (SS)** **Exit Level TAAS (SS)**
May	**RS-ongoing** **BBR (cT)** **Summer School Conf. (IP)** **TAAS info. to Parents (SS)**			**SAT I&II (SS)**	**SAT I&II (SS)** **AP Testing (SS)** **Identify graduating students (IP)** **Graduation (SS)**
June	**Guidance Program Evaluation (SS)**			**SAT I&II (SS)** **ACT (SS)**	**SAT I&II (SS)** **ACT (SS)**

***KEYS**

C-Guidance Curriculum by Counseling Staff
T-Guidance Curriculum by Teacher
O-Guidance Curriculum by Other (DARE Officer, Nurse, etc.)
RS-Responsive Services (consultation, community referrals, crisis intervention, individual counseling)
IP-Individual Planning
SS-System Support
c-Classroom Session
g-Small Group Session

P-Sample Calendar, High School
ross-Fairbanks ISD
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tember, 2001

DEVELOPMENTAL GUIDANCE PROGRAM
High School
Caseload Assignment of Counseling Staff
End-of-Year Evaluation

_____
(school name)

(List each counselor by name, assignment and activities.)

Counseling Staff*	Title	Grade Level Served	Enrollment	Number of Small Groups Conducted	Number of Students Served in Small Groups	Number of Guidance Curriculum Presentations	Number of Students Served in Guidance Curriculum Presentations
TOTAL							

*Include all campus counseling staff—Campus Counselors, Intern, YSS, Special Education Counselor, Psychologist

DGP-Caseload Assignments. High School. End-of-Year
Cypress-Fairbanks ISD
Guidance and Counseling Dept

Part 7

Critical Issues in Evaluation of Professional School Counselors' Performance within a Comprehensive Guidance Program

Ensuring Professionally Relevant Supervision and Professional Development: *A State-Level Experience*

Lela Kosteck Bunch
Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Jefferson City, Missouri

Ensuring Professionally Relevant Supervision and Professional Development: *A District-Level Experience*

Katherine O. Synatschk
Austin Independent School District
Austin, Texas

Evaluation of Professional School Counselors' Performance within a Comprehensive Guidance Program

Being accountable for the quality of their performance means that school counselors are held to clearly defined professional standards of competence and to expressed standards of commitment to their job and profession. It entails that school counselors' jobs be defined, and that professionally appropriate supervision and performance evaluation be provided. Counselors are encouraged to seek continuous professional development. School counselors' special professional identity is recognized and enhanced in a comprehensive guidance program.

When a relevant and fair system is in place to ensure that counselors are held to a high level of professionalism, students, parents, teachers, and the counselors themselves benefit from the special competencies that counselors contribute to schools. When the evaluation system is well implemented, a comprehensive guidance program is continually enhanced. When no such system is in place, or when school counselors are evaluated in relation to standards designed for other staff members (e.g., administrators or teachers), there is no incentive for counselors to apply their specialty. This often results in impaired implementation and inferior program quality.

Chapter Fifteen

Ensuring Professionally Relevant Supervision and Professional Development: *A State-Level Experience*

Lela Kosteck Bunch
Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Jefferson City, Missouri

In examining the topic of evaluation, it is necessary to look at the role of evaluation in supervision and professional development. Why is evaluation important? Gysbers and Henderson (2000) state that in order for any program to be effective, all those charged with responsibility for the program must focus on accountability. Evaluation of program, results, and personnel is a part of providing for accountability. Personnel evaluation should be an ongoing process that provides feedback resulting in improvement and, thus, promoting continuous growth and development.

Generally, the word evaluation evokes negative feelings, and for good reason. Evaluation based on old schools of thought was conducted from a deficit model. It was regarded as punitive because it often focused on finding fault, identifying weaknesses, and citing what was bad or wrong based on an external observation. In fact, evaluation was sometimes used as a tool to eliminate individuals from the profession.

With the current teacher and counselor shortages, however, education cannot afford to waste its valuable resources. Of course, it is still important to weed out absolutely poor candidates, but the focus of current best practices in evaluation is to provide the supervision and guidance needed to address the problems of individuals who can benefit from such interventions, as well as to promote positive growth and development. The supervisor has a key role in this process by helping to build confidence and provide support and assistance.

Need for a Professional School Counselor Evaluation Tool

The Missouri Excellence in Education Act of 1993 was a statewide initiative designed to ensure that educators were provided with supervision designed to help them grow and develop as professionals. It was part of an effort to ensure that Missouri students would achieve competency and to close the "achievement gap" between students of various ethnic groups. As a result of this act, the Performance-Based Teacher Evaluation System (PBTES) was developed in Missouri. One component of PBTES was mentoring, which was viewed as critical in helping practitioners make the transition from novice to experienced professionals. In addition, it was recognized that the responsibility for evaluation resided at the local district level. Overall, the evaluation of professional educators was to be based on their performance in specific areas. In time, the need for a separate instrument for professional school counselors became increasingly apparent.

This development came none too soon. Professional school counselors across the state were being evaluated in a variety of ways and to varying degrees. Some of the larger or more innovative schools had designed their own instruments or forms specifically tailored to the professional school counselor role. However, many professional school counselors in the state were not receiving a formal evaluation process due to the lack of an appropriate instrument. On the contrary, for many evaluation was a very informal process with no real viable outcome that could result in positive change or improvement. Another common practice across the state was for professional school counselors to be assessed using an instrument designed for classroom teachers. Because many of the items on such an instrument are not relevant to the role of the professional school counselor, they often would be marked "not applicable" or left blank. A large number of "not applicable" responses negated the purpose of evaluation and made the overall evaluation process nonproductive and ineffective. The problem, of course, was that professional school counselors were not being evaluated accurately with an instrument designed specifically for the important work they do.

The lack of a professional school counselor evaluation tool was not beneficial for professional school counselors because they received neither clear direction nor general guidelines to help them grow and develop. Without an accountability component, there was no way to ensure that they were implementing the most effective possible comprehensive guidance program. A relevant and appropriate professional school counselor evaluation tool also highlights a counselor's job responsibilities, ensuring that the administrator or supervisor understands the role of a school counselor in a comprehensive

guidance system. Thus, the lack of such a tool did not benefit supervisors or administrators either. Likewise, the absence of appropriate evaluation was not in the best interests of the children in the local school district, because there was no accountability system in place to ensure that the best prepared professionals were providing for the needs of the children. Finally, it was not good for the school and community as a whole because the potential benefits of a fully implemented comprehensive guidance program to support the goals of the school were not likely to be realized.

Although best practices emphasized the accountability and professional growth and development component of the evaluation process for teachers, there was no such element in place for professional school counselors. As the need for a separate instrument for professional school counselors became more and more profound, the Guidance and Placement Section of the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education was given the opportunity to create a document designed specifically for this purpose.

Design of a Relevant Evaluation Instrument

The challenge then became to design an instrument that would follow the format of the PBTES instrument but be tailored to the unique role of the professional school counselor in delivering a comprehensive guidance program. The resulting process was called the Performance-Based Professional School Counselor Evaluation System (PBPSCES).

Like its teacher evaluation counterpart, PBPSCES was developed by a statewide committee. The following groups were invited to participate in the development of this project:

- professional school counselor practitioners representing all regions of the state;
- professional school counselor practitioners representing various grade levels;
- administrators;
- counselor educators;
- representatives of the Missouri School Counselor Association, the state professional organization for professional school counselors;
- state education department staff; and
- the state consultant on the PBTES

The PBPSCES mirrors the PBTES in its emphasis on evaluation and professional development. The instrument, as it was developed, was based on the premise that professional school counselors spend 100% of their time involved in guidance and counseling activities. It has the following features and benefits:

- It utilizes criteria related to guidance and counseling competencies.
- It correlates with the Missouri comprehensive guidance program model.
- It assumes that a job description has been developed and approved for the district's professional school counselors.
- It provides a tool for dialogue between the administrator or supervisor and the professional school counselor regarding the counselor's role.
- It provides professional school counselors with a vehicle for self-directed professional development.

However, the PBPSCES differs from the PBTES in significant areas. Most important, it is tied directly to the professional school counselor's role and identifies 15 specific performance criteria directly related to that role. It also recognizes the differing evaluation and supervision needs of beginning versus experienced professional school counselors. Addressing a concern specific to Missouri, the PBPSCES recognizes that new counselors may have different tenure statuses as district employees. In other words, an educator with 20 years experience as a teacher in the district who is beginning his or her first year as a professional school counselor will have different evaluation needs from a fourth-year counselor who does not yet have tenure in the district. The PBPSCES also addresses the issue of confidentiality, providing guidelines for administrators or supervisors regarding appropriate and inappropriate observation.

One significant aspect of the PBPSCES is that it not only provides direction for supervision and professional development, but it also emphasizes collaboration between the supervisor and the professional school counselor. It functions as a tool for dialogue, which gives the professional school counselor an opportunity to advocate and communicate with, and to educate, his or her supervisor. Realistically, professional school counselors cannot afford to assume that everyone, particularly those who supervise them, has a clear understanding of the work they do. On the contrary, many administrators or supervisors have not taken a course in comprehensive guidance as a part of their training, so they generally rely on their own personal experiences with professional school counselors—whatever those experiences have been—to determine their expectations for the role.

Additionally, the PBPSCES helps define how professional school counselors fit into a comprehensive school improvement plan. Although it recognizes the unique role of the professional school counselor, it also validates guidance and counseling as a part of the educational process as a whole. Guidance and counseling is an integral part of the educational system, and the system support component of the Missouri comprehensive guidance program model emphasizes that professional school counselors support school goals. Moreover, in Missouri the student guidance competencies identified as a part of the guidance program model have been cross-referenced to the Missouri

Show-Me Standards (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 1996) so the model is directly linked to supporting student achievement. Furthermore, because professional school counselors serve as change agents, they have the potential to promote positive school climate and contribute to ensuring that the school runs smoothly. Likewise, the PBPSCES recognizes that everyone makes a contribution to the smooth operation of the school and that the professional school counselor is no exception.

In order to ensure its validity, the PBPSCES is linked to the Missouri Comprehensive Guidance Program Model, the Missouri Show-Me Standards, individual professional development, school counselor training standards, student success, and best practices in supervision and evaluation. The instrument can be viewed at www.dese.state.mo.us/divteacherqual/profdev/Counselorscorrected2.pdf.

A copy of the *Guidelines for Performance-Based Professional School Counselor Evaluation* (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2000) was sent out to all administrators in the state at the beginning of the school year in August 2000. Professional school counselors were also notified that the document had been sent to their administrators. Unfortunately, many school counselors indicated that their administrators had not contacted them about it, and some were not even aware that it had been received. Overall, it seemed that there was poor communication between counselors and their supervisors in some districts regarding the availability of the new instrument. The challenge continues to be to educate administrators and supervisors regarding the comprehensive guidance program and its benefits to the school program. Certainly, the PBPSCES can be beneficial tool for dialogue between the professional school counselor and his or her supervisor. Of course, it would be ideal to require administrators and supervisors to take a class about comprehensive guidance and counseling programs in order to improve their understanding and insight into the role of the professional school counselor.

Certainly, the PBPSCES is an important first step in recognizing and realizing the unique role of the professional school counselor in the schools. Another positive step to improve awareness would be for counselor education programs to spend more time in the preservice stage providing counselor trainees with the skills necessary to advocate for their programs once they go into the schools.

Conclusion

Personnel evaluation is a critical component in the evaluation of a comprehensive guidance program. The effectiveness of the evaluation system depends upon (a) the mentoring of first- and second-year

professional school counselors as they make the transition into their career, and (b) the training of professional school counselors and their administrators or supervisors regarding the collaborative decision making that must take place between them regarding the evaluation process.

Overall, the PBPSCES can be a valuable resource. If used in the spirit it was designed, it has the potential for bringing the activities of professional school counselors in line with their expertise, allowing them to devote 100% of their time to 100% of the students, and ensuring that all students gain competency in life skills. (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education)

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About the Author

Lela Kosteck Bunch, Ph.D., NCC, LPC, is currently director of guidance and placement in the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. In the past she has worked as a school counselor, a supervisor of adult education, an outpatient therapist, and a psychoeducational consultant. She can be reached at lbunch1@mail.dese.state.mo.us, or at P.O. Box 480, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0480.

Chapter Sixteen

Ensuring Professionally Relevant Supervision and Professional Development: *A District-Level Experience*

Katherine O. Synatschk
Austin Independent School District, Austin, Texas

The issues of school counselor supervision, evaluation, and professional development have been identified by many as critical to the successful implementation of guidance in schools. This discussion will contribute to the understanding of the benefits and absolute necessity of having an appraisal system for counselors that is aligned with the comprehensive guidance program model.

The primary purpose of evaluating the performance of professional school counselors is to strive for the provision of the highest quality services to students. Relating the data gathered regarding a counselor's performance to established performance standards allows strengths and weaknesses to be identified. The weaknesses become targets for enhancement, and the strengths become the foundation on which to build not only improved performance but also an improved program. As individuals move closer to becoming ideal professionals, performance evaluation provides a means for identifying those who are able to make special contributions and those who are potential leaders (Maliszewski, n.d.).

Developing a Performance Evaluation Instrument for School Counselors

In this monograph, the experiences of a large, urban school district will be used to illustrate the issues related to performance appraisal for counselors. The Austin Independent School District executed a five-year plan for the restructuring of guidance and counseling and the implementation of the comprehensive guidance program model. Prior to the full implementation of this model, the counselors' performance had been evaluated using a 15-year-old instrument entitled the Non-

Teaching Professionals Appraisal Form. This generic evaluation instrument had been used to evaluate professionals who performed a very wide range of responsibilities other than direct teaching. This instrument contained many evaluation categories that were irrelevant to counselor functions and allowed no appropriate connections to the competencies called for within the comprehensive guidance program model. Counselors with excellent competencies had no plans for growth, and counselors with deficiencies had no clear direction for accountability and improvement. Too often, less than favorable evaluations were attributed to personality clashes with the appraiser rather than nonperformance of critical competencies. Moreover, in the absence of a clear understanding of the comprehensive guidance program model, appraisal was complicated by the conflicting expectations of the appraiser and the counselor.

In the beginning stages of the comprehensive guidance implementation process, voluntary compliance at the campus level was permitted. Implementing a counselor appraisal system aligned with the model promoted the concept that these new expectations for performing counseling functions were important both to the counselor and to the administrator-appraiser because these were the criteria on which the counselor's job performance would be evaluated. It was hoped that the appraisal of specific counselor competencies would promote the implementation of those competencies and the reduction of other non-evaluated functions.

Successes

As director of guidance for the district, I headed the process of restructuring the evaluation component of the comprehensive guidance program. As a result of my experiences, I can offer several recommendations to others embarking on this process.

Take a Team Approach to Designing the Evaluation

To begin the process of restructuring the guidance program evaluation, I created a district counselor leadership team. This team consisted of professional counselors who were nominated by their colleagues and represented all levels of counseling within the district. To address the various tasks of the restructuring process, this team was divided into smaller work groups, given training in their specific area, and paid a stipend to work as a group in the evenings during the school year and for periods of time during the summer. The counselor appraisal system work group began the development of an evaluation instrument by

building on the foundation of appraisal work done by others in the field (American School Counseling Association, 1999; Gysbers & Henderson, 1994; Texas Counseling Association, 1992; Texas Education Agency, 1998). They also spent a significant amount of time researching existing instruments and systems available for use with the comprehensive guidance program model.

During the initial planning sessions, we identified a wide range of participants to involve in the process. Over the course of development, we added even more groups to ensure understanding of and support for the system. Among the participants were the director of guidance and counseling and her supervisor, the superintendent's Principals Advisory Council, the Counselor Leadership Team, all counselors (grades K–12), Human Resources Department staff, professional teacher organizations, district administrators (principals, area superintendents, and assistant superintendents), and finally, the board of trustees for approval of the completed system.

Begin with the Job Description

We recognized that the development process would have to begin from a well-defined and accepted job description for each level of counselor in the comprehensive guidance program. Therefore, it was necessary to gain a thorough understanding of the comprehensive guidance program model and the shift from the traditional job description of counselors. We felt it useful to have broad support for the language of the job descriptions from the various audiences using them: counselors and campus- and district-level administrators. We worked to refine the language and get support from a broad base of school and community stakeholders. We found that any group we wished to involve in the revision of the job descriptions needed some preliminary explanation of comprehensive guidance; otherwise the input we received amounted to the traditional limitless list of services rather than a program base. Thus, each step of the development process afforded valuable opportunities to educate users of the program.

Train District-Level Administrators in the Model

We trained my supervisor in the comprehensive guidance program model so that she could assist in familiarizing administrative staff with the components of model and the competencies that exist within each one. With this information, she could advocate for the model in various contexts where issues regarding the counselors' performance or the program were raised.

Align with Other Professional Appraisal Systems in the District

Simultaneous with the construction of the counselor appraisal system, the teacher appraisal system in the district was undergoing a similar process. We attempted to align the two systems where appropriate; for example, in the articulation of competencies and rubrics for judging their attainment. At the same time, however, we designed the counselor system to avoid some overly complex features of the teacher appraisal instrument design, thus facilitating its use by appraisers.

Design a Simple, Straightforward Process

We designed the process for appraisal to be more than a simple end-of-year checklist. At the same time, we recognized that it was important make efficient use of counselor and administrator time and not encumber the process with unnecessary steps that robbed students of counselor time. The following process was developed:

1. The counselor or counselors complete a campus priority plan (CPP) for the guidance and counseling program, based on a student needs assessment.
2. The appraiser reviews and approves the CPP.
3. The counselor collects evidence of work in the five areas of the comprehensive guidance program: guidance curriculum, individual planning, responsive services, system support, and professionalism.
4. A midyear evaluation is optional unless the counselor is newly hired or in contractual difficulty.
5. All counselors participate in a year-end final evaluation conference that includes goal setting for the following year.

We wanted to integrate the program planning process into the appraisal process to cement it as a standard step in annual guidance program planning. Therefore, we made step 1 in the appraisal process the designing of a CPP for the year based on a student needs assessment. Sharing the CPP with and having it approved by the appraiser contributed to a clear understanding and agreement about the focus of the counselor's work and the program's priorities for the year.

Dedicate Sufficient Time to Developing and Piloting the Process

Over the course of a year, the work group reported on their progress and obtained feedback from the other members of the counselor leadership team and their colleagues regarding the design of and competencies included in the appraisal. At one point in the project, based on feedback from counselors, the work group completely reformatted the original prototype to align it with the four components of the comprehensive

guidance program model. They reviewed various formats for presenting the evaluation information and reaffirmed their recommendation to implement a system rather than a checklist. Finally, the work group piloted the system for an entire school year with counselors and administrators who volunteered to participate. This pilot allowed counselors to become very familiar with the competencies expected of them and the methods for documentation prior to formal implementation.

Provide Comprehensive Guidance Program Model Training for All Appraisers

As director of guidance, I provided training sessions for all appraisers charged with evaluating counselors' performance. I formed a collaboration with the Department of Human Resources to have members of that department co-lead trainings and publish and distribute the appraisal forms. Appraisers were asked to select from a number of sessions offered at various time and locations to ensure convenience and small-group settings allowing ample discussion. Because appraisers needed a thorough understanding of the comprehensive guidance program model in order to evaluate counselors accurately, the training sessions included an in-depth review of the four components of the model (guidance curriculum, responsive services, individual planning, and system support) and the fifth area of professionalism. The training turned out to be an excellent opportunity for increasing administrators' awareness of the benefits of the model. Consistently throughout the training sessions, administrators were favorably impressed with the numbers of students who can be served when the comprehensive guidance program model is implemented. The administrators were provided handbooks of materials that included examples of work from each of the components, descriptions of evidence, sample forms, and timelines for completion of key tasks. The manual served as an overview of the model for implementation in this district.

What Didn't Work

Performance appraisal is a complicated task. Over the course of the process of developing the appraisal system, we learned many lessons and often had to take a flexible approach to the task. Discussed in this section are steps we took that we later had to correct and redesign.

Train Human Resources Staff Too

Expecting the director of human resources and human resources staff to

carry the load of development and implementation of the counselor appraisal system without an understanding of the program model and program needs was unrealistic and limiting. Early and thorough orientation to the comprehensive guidance program model would have facilitated the staff's assistance with and responsibility for the process. Likewise, discussions about evaluation strategies with any groups that were uninformed about comprehensive guidance were largely a waste of time.

Do Not Try to Cover Too Much Ground in One Appraisal Form

Having an abundance of indicators in a tool that did not align with the comprehensive guidance components was frustrating and distracting for counselors committed to implementation of the comprehensive guidance program model. Once the work group clearly organized the instrument around the components of the model, in response to feedback from colleagues, it became much easier to focus on counselor functions rather than a collection of nebulous indicators.

Avoid Timing Conflicts

Development of the counselor appraisal system began at a time when the district was implementing a new appraisal system for teachers that was radically different from the previous system and required extensive training for administrators. This reduced both administrators' available time for additional training and their tolerance for learning yet another system. In addition, some counselors felt that the process was moving too quickly and expressed concern that because their campuses were not yet able to implement comprehensive guidance, they would be held to appraisal standards that they were not allowed to demonstrate.

Make Reasonable Documentation Demands

The initial process required extensive documentation from counselors. Some felt that the documentation demands were excessive. It was determined that the process would be better served by a simple system of evidence collection than an elaborate portfolio that presented an additional chore and took time from direct programming with students. In the pilot form, not having a clear, concrete form for the counselor improvement plan was problematic. The team decided that the more structure we could provide in this area, the greater the chance that an effective and appropriate improvement plan would arise from the interaction between counselor and appraiser.

Advice to Others Developing a Counselor Appraisal System

- Take the time to educate all constituencies—counselors, parents, and administrators at all levels—before you begin the process so that the work they do and the analyses they make of the model and the related job descriptions and program expectations are well informed.
- Spend time with counselors in a variety of formats to ensure full understanding and respond to concerns, obstacles, and system implementation issues.
- Even though excellent established appraisal tools are now available, undertake an effort in your school district to go through the process of establishing a system that meets your and your students' needs and that has the support of all users.
- View the task as the development of a system of ongoing needs assessment, priority goal setting, and evaluation.
- Consider the development of a program audit to follow the individual counselor performance appraisal system, as the two are inextricably linked and supportive of each other.
- In training sessions, review the comprehensive guidance program model. (Review is always helpful, and due to the turnover in principals, there are always new administrators to educate.) Focus on benefits in terms of numbers of students served, student competencies achieved, school climate effects, discipline referral declines, etc. Address competencies within each category and how they could be operationalized at each level, the kinds of evidence that would be apparent, and in-depth descriptions of those behaviors. The district guidance curriculum, Live This!, was highlighted, as were the district guidance program's Individual Academic Career Planning process guides and CRISIS: Counselors' Responsive and Interventive Services in Schools guide. We found that principals who were already implementing comprehensive guidance programs in their schools were the best and the most vocal advocates—and they certainly had their colleagues' attention! They served to reinforce the significant benefits of having counselors involved in the delivery of a comprehensive guidance program rather than an array of clerical and administrative tasks.
- Provide training in the appraisal system to staff in human resources, employee relations, or whatever department is designated in your district to interact with counselors who are in contractual difficulty due to performance concerns. A full understanding of the system will enable these staff to advise both the counselor and the appraiser about the competencies under review and evidence of their appropriate

demonstration.

The experience of developing a counselor appraisal system in a large, urban school district highlighted the importance of having a widespread and thorough understanding of the comprehensive guidance program model among all critical constituencies in the district and community. The challenge became one of timing—does one wait until a program has been completely implemented or utilize the appraisal system as an effective tool for advancing the implementation?

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About the Author

Katherine O. Synatschk, Ph.D., LPC, is currently executive director of the Books and Materials Division at PRO-ED Publishing, in Austin, Texas. At the time of the work described in this monograph, she had been for seven years the director of guidance and counseling in the Austin Independent School District. Prior taking this administrative position, she served as a high school counselor, a visiting teacher, and a special education teacher. Additionally, she has taught at the university level and been a counselor and educational consultant in independent practice. She can be reached at Ksynatschk@proedinc.com.

Part 8

Critical Issues in Enhancing Comprehensive Guidance Programs

Extending Program Resources: *Meeting Necessity with Invention*

Judith Fuston & Mark Hargens
The School District of St. Joseph
St. Joseph, Missouri

Revising and Enhancing the Davis School District Comprehensive Guidance Program: *Working Together Works*

Diann Davis
Davis School District
Farmington, Utah

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Enhancing Comprehensive Guidance Programs

The process for installing a comprehensive guidance programs entails thorough work to plan, design, implement, evaluate, and enhance the program. Many guidance program enhancements occur throughout this process. Once the program has been implemented for a period of time and systematic program evaluation has occurred, the data from that evaluation provide a basis for reconsideration of the program's basic structure and priorities. Meaningful evaluations provide solid data about what is actually occurring in and as a result of the program. School communities and students change over time. These three sets of information—evaluation data, reassessments of students' needs, and timely information about the status of the school community—suggest what enhancements are needed to update the comprehensive guidance program.

When evaluation data are incorporated with updated student and school-community needs information, and new program design decisions are made on that basis, the comprehensive guidance program maintains its relevance within the school or school system. The guidance program remains responsive to its clients (students, parents, teachers) and aligned with the mission of the school or school system. With widespread national attention currently focusing on the mental health of our country's young people, such responsiveness and realignment has led to expanded resources to support an enhanced program. When updating does not occur, guidance programs become stale and, perhaps, irrelevant in their environment. Such impairments severely diminish the validity and credibility of the program.

Chapter Seventeen

Extending Program Resources: *Meeting Necessity with Invention*

Judith Fuston & Mark Hargens
The School District of St. Joseph, St. Joseph, Missouri

It has been said that necessity is the mother of invention. Nowhere does that ring more true than in the implementation of a comprehensive guidance program. Squeezing ten hours of work into a six-hour day is a feat that would make Houdini smile . . . and yet school counselors are faced with that challenge regularly. The scope of work is clear: deliver the guidance curriculum, facilitate individual planning, be responsive to the needs and concerns of students, and complete those tasks that maintain and enhance the total guidance program. Add a few non-guidance activities to the mix and either counselors find themselves playing the "what gets cut?" game or they find ways to work smarter. Many times "working smarter" translates into a combination of snappy scheduling and inventing new ways of "delivering the goods."

Although prudent schedules are important, counselors don't assemble widgets. They work with human beings, many of whom are going through the most confusing times of their lives. Adolescents' needs don't always fit into a counselor's well-developed schedule. Consequently, St. Joseph, Missouri, counselors find ways to stretch the school day through collaborative strategies that allow them to do their designated work *and* maintain their sanity. This monograph will describe a number of strategies that have proven helpful to our guidance department.

Utilizing Retired Counselors and Mentors

Before delving into specific components of comprehensive guidance, let's discuss some basics. When counselors are absent for an extended period, say a week or more, their program suffers. Classroom commitments fall behind, groups are left unseen, and students receiving

individual services lose momentum. To prevent such backsliding, we draw from our pool of retired counselors to act as substitutes. Because they are familiar with the program, and in some cases with the students, and because they have a consultation network already established, these folks can keep the momentum flowing. Similarly, all counselors new to the St. Joseph district are assigned a counseling mentor. The mentor is a veteran who knows community resources, the comprehensive guidance program, and the school district infrastructure. New counselors know they can contact their mentor with any question or concern. Materials, consultations about student issues, and the ins and outs of working with many personality types are but a few of the subjects mentors and new counselors cover. These two ideas help keep an up-and-running program moving forward and jump-start a novice's job performance.

Using Computers

Another "basic" involves the use of the computer. Good record-keeping software programs are time-savers. Seated at their desks, counselors can view students' demographic information, attendance, grades, and schedules. With a few keystrokes, high school counselors can see the number of students in a particular class, or a list of students failing one or several classes. Electronic mail has made information sharing easier and faster. Changes to the guidance curriculum appear quickly and are universally available through the counseling website. Meeting dates, staff-development offerings, and job openings are also posted on the website.

During the 2000–01 school year, middle school counselors began doing aptitude surveys via the computer. Working in a computer laboratory setting and using self-scoring software has saved considerable time. Good software helps link aptitude and career options quickly and pleasantly. This is another way the computer literate counselor is able to work smarter.

The computer offers many kinds of help to the high school counselor. Scholarship information and applications are now computerized. Reports are generated via the computer. If we want to know the number of young women applying for scholarships over the last five years, we can generate that information in a matter of moments. Learning the operation of a piece of software takes time, but once counselors become familiar with a program like SASI or Filemaker Pro, their lives are simplified.

Collaborating with Teachers

Career education is an important part of Missouri comprehensive

guidance. However, in the St. Joseph school district, classroom teachers deliver the lion's share of career education. Each curriculum has a career component that integrates career pathway information and the world of work with the subject matter being taught. This is a win-win situation for students, teachers, and counselors. Teachers integrate real-world application of knowledge while delivering daily doses of language arts, mathematics, social studies, and science. Community members visit elementary classrooms to demonstrate how these subjects are used in their everyday work. Counselors in almost all district elementary schools arrange yearly career fairs, but they are not responsible for the total delivery of the career component of the guidance curriculum.

Drawing on Community Groups

In the middle school there is more counselor involvement in career education. Through the Boy Scouts of America and its Learning for Life program, counselors are able to request working men and women to speak in classrooms where related occupations have been presented and connected to the subject matter being taught. Although some counselor time is spent in organizing these encounters, it doesn't represent nearly the outlay of time that would be needed were the counselor to present all these sessions personally. The Learning for Life coordinator has organized a pool of presenters who make themselves available for classroom presentations. The best videotape in the world cannot possibly answer all the questions generated by seventh- and eighth-grade students. Having a real person who actually does the job under discussion can be invaluable . . . and it can save the counselor some time.

The enhancement of our high school career guidance program is an interesting story. Back in the early 1990s, we helped write a federal grant that brought 32 AmeriCorps workers to St. Joseph. Seven of the 32 worked in the school setting, and three of those seven were in high schools. Their mission was to better connect the business community to the high school; to inform students, particularly those who were not interested in attending a four-year college or university, about the world of work; and to spark in high school teachers the desire to align their subject matter to real-world work experience. Ten years later the three career technicians are still working away at this mission. Funding streams have changed from AmeriCorps dollars, to Welfare to Work dollars, to School District of St. Joseph dollars. Their work has proven so valuable that the district has been willing to pick up the technicians' salaries. Just as an aside, two of the original AmeriCorps workers have completed teaching degrees and are going on to their own careers in the educational setting.

The service the career technicians have rendered to students and the load they have taken from the high school counselors is huge. Counselors talk to students about their educational plans, discover students' career aspirations, and then share this information with the career technician. The technician works with the students to delve more deeply into particular career options; the training necessary for these careers; the postsecondary centers that offer such training; and details such as cost, proximity to home, etc. The student, career technician, parents, and school counselor then proceed to research and apply for scholarship opportunities. The technicians' role in delivering comprehensive guidance has been invaluable. In addition to the contributions already mentioned, they also arrange job-shadowing experiences, coordinate the Learning for Life visits in the high schools, and help organize career fairs. They have given high school counselors the gift of time by shouldering part of the career education load. We had a need. We invented a solution.

Sharing the Load with Other Mental Health Professionals

The story is similar in the area of responsive services in the high school. When comprehensive guidance was originally implemented in the St. Joseph district, high school counselors were in the greatest need of assistance. Although they desired to deliver the model, they were still expected to shoulder many of their more traditional duties. Invention to the rescue! By collaborating with our local Division of Family Services and the Caring Communities Initiative, we were able to hire three social workers. Two are licensed and the third is soon to be licensed. Licensure is important because part of the social workers' salary costs can be billed back to Medicaid if they are fully licensed. With partners paying two-thirds of the salary cost combined with Medicaid reimbursement, a school district like St. Joseph can afford to hire highly trained social workers to become a part of the guidance department.

What role do social workers play? Because the Division of Family Services is a funding partner, the three are highly involved in the prevention of abuse and neglect. Operationally this translates into working with pregnant and parenting youth, youth involved in abusive relationships with either parents or partners, and youth who for one reason or another have become disenfranchised from their families. Their work also reaches into the middle school. By working with younger siblings of pregnant or parenting high school students, the social workers hope to prevent additional early pregnancies.

The school district is interested in keeping these youngsters in school. Every day they attend, they create dollars for the district. And every day they attend they are less likely to add to the dropout rate. Caring Communities is

interested in both the abuse and the persistence to graduation issues. The school counselor is interested in meeting the needs of the students, and the social worker has the expertise and the time to do just that. Consider the load removed from the counselor. Many of these youngsters are in chronic crisis. They require school-based support if they are to complete high school. Social workers can provide that support or they know where to find the help needed, be it a shelter, food, medical assistance, legal counsel, or a myriad of other services. Through collaboration we have provided better services to students and gained minutes for the counselor to be involved in something other than crisis intervention.

One elementary school counselor, working in partnership with her administrator and the local Caring Communities Initiative, found a way to bring a mental health practitioner into the school setting several days a week. Working with no more than 10 families at a time, the mental health professional acts as a case manager. Through an assessment process that involves, among other things, an in-home study, the professional and the family identify strengths and needs. The case manager then acts to link the family to community resources. Some community services are delivered right at the school site. Again, by working with 10 of the school's most dysfunctional families, providing individual and group counseling for their children, linking them to services, and providing consultation to teachers, the mental health worker is saving the counselor hours of time and at the same time providing a comprehensive service to the family that the school counselor simply would not have the time or expertise to deliver.

Other community agencies offer opportunities for group counseling in the school setting. The St. Joseph YWCA, working with grant dollars, provides CHOICES groups that focus on raising self-esteem and a sense of empowerment. These groups run each semester at all of the middle schools. This is an example of another pair of hands helping the counselor to deliver a responsive service.

Similarly, the Buchanan County Juvenile Office promotes more positive relationships between mothers and daughters through the Mirror Image Groups. Here teens and their moms meet regularly to improve communication, develop empathy for one another and, in general, get to know one another on a deeper level. Supported by grant dollars, this endeavor concludes by taking mothers and daughters on a "field trip." Although spending a night in a hotel might not seem exciting to some, for these moms and daughters, it can be quite an adventure. The school counselor's role in all this is to coordinate the time, date, and place for the school-based meetings and to make referrals. Again, this is a way the counselors' time can be stretched by partnering with another community agency.

Before- and after-school programs at the elementary and middle schools provide great resources for enhancing a guidance program. Serving to build linkages, the counselor
can tap into tutoring, recreational, and fine arts resources. These on-site programs provide hours of contact between students and good role models. Again, the counselor couldn't possibly provide the minutes of service being described here. Two of these middle school programs are underwritten by grants created collaboratively with the Juvenile Office and the City of St. Joseph. Elementary programs are paid for through Department of Elementary and Secondary Education dollars and money provided through the Caring Communities Initiative.

Another enhancement to the professional school counselor's work is participating in community cross-training. First, the opportunity to see and hear excellent speakers is really quite remarkable. This year alone, St. Joseph counselors have heard nationally known presenters on the issues of grief in the school setting, teenage drug and alcohol use and its effects on adolescent brain development, and Corrective Thinking. These speakers were brought to the community by agencies other than the school district. Costs were minimized while opportunities to mingle with people from other community agencies were maximized. When school people, juvenile officers, Division of Family Services workers, mental health professionals, and others start putting similar strategies in place, everyone's work becomes a little more effective. Collaborative training is cost effective and powerful in many ways.

Conclusion

In summary, it seems that collaboration, grant writing, and a willingness to do what it takes to get what we need are at the center of St. Joseph's guidance program. The superintendent of schools promotes a "schools without walls" philosophy. He not only encourages collaboration, he demands it! That mindset opens doors for all types of partnerships—and for all types of grant writing opportunities. The Juvenile Office might be able to apply for something a school district couldn't and visa versa. Underpinning all this activity, however, is knowledge of and respect for community agencies, their missions, and the human beings who work there. The task of the 21st-century guidance counselor *cannot* be accomplished in a vacuum. The job is too overwhelming. A caseload of 500 to 1 is too daunting. In St. Joseph we feel that the professional school counselor needs all the help he or she can muster. As administrators

we need to recognize our role in helping counselors link to resources that can help them "deliver the goods."

Necessity may be the mother of invention, but we don't believe in being needy for too long. Help *is* available! By knowing and partnering with community resources, counselors can better meet the challenges 21st-century schools face.

About the Authors

Judith K. Fuston has been for nine years coordinator of counseling services and Safe & Drug Free Schools in the School District of St. Joseph, Missouri. St. Joseph School District was, to our knowledge, the first school district in the United States to develop and implement the comprehensive guidance program model. Prior to taking her current administrative position, Judith was an elementary school counselor and teacher. Additionally, she is a university instructor and consultant. She can be reached at judy.fuston@sjsd.k12.mo.us.

Mark Hargens, Ph.D., was for 14 years the director of pupil personnel services in the School District of St. Joseph, Missouri. Mark is currently the associate superintendent for personnel in the School District of St. Joseph.

Chapter Eighteen

Revising and Enhancing the Davis School District Comprehensive Guidance Program: *Working Together Works*

Diann Davis
Davis School District, Farmington, Utah

> The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.
>
> —*Eleanor Roosevelt*

"Working together works" was the attitude that fostered the beginnings of comprehensive guidance success in Davis School District. Now, after several years, comprehensive guidance has soared to new heights with enhancements and revisions that were once only dreams in the minds and hearts of many Davis educators. Davis district has proven that "working together works" applies to everyone, not just the counseling staff.

The Model for Public Education in Davis School District was designed under the direction of Superintendent Dr. Darrell K. White and a committee of Davis district directors. This model became the conduit for enhancing and revising our comprehensive guidance program. Comprehensive guidance naturally became integrated within the school system rather than being just a department in each school. The model is extracted below; a complete, detailed description of the Model for Public Education will be provided upon request.

Model for Public Education

Purposes of Public Education

Public education has the mandate to develop within the hearts and minds

of each new generation the qualities of a moral populace, strong scholars, committed citizens, and active workers. The founding fathers knew that without these qualities, provided through public education, our nation would not long endure. The Davis School District accepts this mandate and focuses its work around the four primary purposes of public education: Essential Learning Skills, Civic Responsibility, Career Preparation, and Personal Development. Educators collaborate with individual students and their parents to form a plan of action (SEP/SEOP) which ties these four primary purposes to the needs and goals of the student through the instructional process.

Essential Learning Skills

Educated individuals possess broad-based knowledge in an array of subjects, including communication (reading, writing, speaking, and listening), mathematics, science, social studies, music, art, and foreign languages. Additionally, educated individuals learn the processes that enable them to think in complex ways and to solve problems. The combination of well-developed essential learning skills in communications, mathematics, etc., and effective problem skills provides the foundation for lifelong learning in diverse situations.

Civic Responsibility

An understanding of civic ideals and citizenship responsibilities is critical to full participation in society, and is one of the central purposes of public schools. It is important that these concepts be introduced early and students given the opportunity to practice them in the school setting. As students move through the school experience, they will expand their ability to analyze and evaluate the relationship between societal ideals and practice, and be able to see themselves taking civic roles in their communities. Graduates should be able to recognize the rights and responsibilities of citizens, identify societal needs, and participate in setting directions for public policy. They should learn by experience how to participate in community service and political activities. Civic responsibility requires a commitment to collaborate with others in solving problems and working to support both individual dignity and the common good.

Career Preparation

Citizens who are employable and economically productive are essential in our democratic, free enterprise system. Therefore, another important purpose of public education is to prepare young people for the world of work. An employable individual, in our rapidly changing world, is one who is capable of learning new skills and changing careers as needed. Career preparation is a lifelong process of investigating employment options and exploring, developing, and refining one's career interests and skills.

Personal Development

As individuals mature through public education, they learn to be self-starters, to be responsible for themselves and their own behavior. They learn to be resilient and to work from an internal focus of control based on their own individual moral and ethical convictions. Additionally, they have the opportunity to develop creativity, spontaneity, and expressiveness by having diverse experiences in a variety of areas such as music, visual arts, drama, sports, crafts, photography, service, etc. These experiences also help develop the reflective ability to self-monitor their interests, progress, and relationships. In other words, one of the responsibilities of public education is to insure that students have the opportunity to achieve personal satisfaction, enjoyment, and maturity by providing a variety of experiences in areas of personal interest.

SEP/SEOP (Student Education Plan/Student Education Occupation Plan

The SEP/SEOP is the individual planning process that guides students through their education. This helps ensure that their goals in the four major purposes of education are achieved. The SEP/SEOP provides an individual educational framework for each student that guides them from entry into kindergarten through graduation. The process brings together the students, parents, and school officials to plan, monitor, and manage each student's learning experience.

SEP/SEOP conferences consist of a review of each student's strengths and accomplishments followed by a plan to reach goals in each of the four major purposes of education. This process helps to ensure that students will graduate with the skills, knowledge, values, and commitment to lifelong learning necessary for successful and satisfying adult lives.

The Davis School District Strategic Plan identified the need for more effective SEP/SEOP conferences. The Superintendency Goals also identified SEP/SEOP as a priority for enhancing and revising the learning process. Representatives from several departments from within the district developed a new electronic system that is designed to focus on the four purposes of education in the Davis model. For a number of years our students have been setting school-related goals during their SEOP. Our Model for Public Education recognizes that learning experiences go beyond school, so students now include both educational and out-of-school goals.

Individual planning (SEP/SEOP) has been in place for a number of years in Davis district. Elementary teachers facilitate SEP conferences in consultation with the counselor. Secondary counselors have the primary responsibility to

facilitate SEOP conferences for each student. Identifying SEP/SEOP as the individual compass for every student released the educational potential and power of individual planning. It is now recognized and utilized as a vital and necessary part of the learning process for every student.

Parent involvement is a priority in Davis district. Through the Internet, parents have an immediate avenue to connect with their children's education. They can view details of their children's current grades in each subject or class. Information on future assignments, attendance, and tardies is also available. Security for individual student information is protected with passwords. At home, students can explore, research, and make decisions with their parents prior to the SEOP conference. A self-guided tour of the SEOP was designed for students and parents to work through together at home. The tour offers (a) on-line assessments, (b) resources to guide and support decisions for the individual SEOP, (c) career paths, and (d) recommended courses for individual four-year plans. This part of the Davis District SEOP is available to anyone through the Internet. A portion is reprinted here.

Self-Guided Tour of the SEOP

On this tour, you can find out how to develop an education and career plan to help you reach your goals. You can also pick up useful tips on job hunting, resume writing, and interviewing techniques. Feel free to leave the tour at any time to find out more about a subject just by clicking on the highlighted text.

1. Develop a Student Education Occupation Plan, better known as an SEOP. Think about what you want to do and find out more about the kind of training, education, and skills you will need to achieve your education and career goals.
2. Assess your Career Interests and Work Styles. Think hard about what you enjoy, what you are good at, what kind of Personality you are, and the values you hold.
3. Research the Occupational Outlook Handbook. Find out more about the nature of the jobs that interest you, such as educational requirements, salary, working conditions, future outlook, and anything else that can help you narrow your focus. Research America's Job Bank for occupational information in your local area including company name, address, and contact name.
4. Compare your skills and interests with those of the occupations you've selected. The career that matches your skills, interests, and personality the closest may be the career for you.

5. Develop an education plan to meet your career goals. This plan may include Career Pathways beginning in 9th grade. These pathways help you explore your Career Interest Area as well as prepare you with the Essential Skills & Knowledge Standards (DESK) needed to be successful. Develop the transferable skills necessary for success in both school and the world of work. Review study skills for high school students and for middle level students needed to be successful in the classroom. Review your individual learning style using the Index of Learning Styles Questionnaire.
6. Review the four components of the Senior Project.
7. Explore a career interest area by participating in a Job Shadow activity or Career Internship.
8. Select a School that offers a college degree or training program that best meets your career goal and financial needs. Find out about College and University Admission Requirements.
9. Find out about Financial Aid to help support you in obtaining your career goal. Review Scholarship information which may help you obtain your education goal.
10. Learn about Job Hunting Tips as you prepare to graduate or move into the job market. Prepare your Resume and practice Job Interviewing techniques.
11. Go to your counseling guidance center or career center At Your School for additional information and help on career planning (Davis School District, 1999).

Some of the websites on our tour are specific to Davis School District, others are generic. We welcome you to use our self-guided tour of the SEOP. Our tour has inspired many to create their own quality educational experiences for their students, parents, and teachers. Educational success is enhanced as we all share our resources.

> Success or failure depends more upon attitude than upon capacity. . . . Successful men act as though they have accomplished or are enjoying something. Soon it becomes a reality. Act, look, feel successful, conduct yourself accordingly, and you will be amazed at the positive results.
>
> —*Dr. DuPree Jordan, Jr.*

The electronic SEOP is a success story. Comprehensive guidance is now recognized as an integral and necessary part of every student's learning process.

The model is in place and tools have been developed for implementation. Counselors, administrators, teachers, and parents continue to receive training to utilize the SEOP. Individual schools have organized teams and committees to implement and integrate the new SEOP. Teachers use SEOP goals to make meaningful connections with their curriculum.

As an additional support to SEP/SEOP, considerable resources were dedicated to remodeling and updating all counseling and career centers. Reception and waiting areas, adequate secretarial space, conference rooms, storage, career centers with many computers, and inviting counselor offices were constructed. New furnishings were also part of this extensive commitment. Career centers in 20 secondary schools have been remodeled. The three remaining schools are scheduled to remodel their counseling and career centers.

The electronic SEOP and career centers produce evidence of success. However, the student and parent commitment to ownership of SEOP is the most meaningful success. Students access their data during classroom and individual SEOP sessions, or at their convenience. They can enter and update their goals for school involvement and out-of-school activities within each of the four purposes. It is also important for students to update their accomplishments continually.

In the past, students and parents were often asked, "Have you had your SEOP?" Some interpreted this conference as simply a yearly school expectation. They never clearly understood the connections between classroom curriculum, experiences out of school, and the SEOP. Today questions and answers concerning the SEOP go beyond the completion of a conference. They focus on student goals and plans that fulfill the purposes of education:

- What is your SEOP in Essential Learning Skills/Knowledge?
- What is your SEOP in Civic Responsibility?
- What is your SEOP in Career Preparation?
- What is your SEOP in Personal Development?

Students, parents, and teachers now have instant access to the student's goals, needs, and accomplishments. Growth, change, consistency, and curriculum-completion skills are all available. The entries a student made from 7th through 12th grades are all available to view but changes can be made for the current year only.

> The places I hiked to! The road that I rambled to find the best eggs that have ever been scrambled! If you want to get eggs you can't buy at a store, you have to do things never thought of before.
>
> —*Dr. Seuss, Scrambled Eggs Super*

Enhancing and revising could focus entirely upon changes, improvements, and a higher level of sophistication within the existing program. This process is essential to sustain excellence. But another form of enhancing and revising goes beyond fine tuning into the realm of creation.

Five years ago Davis School District held only the vision and goal of a K–12 comprehensive guidance program. The secondary program had measurable data to substantiate the benefits of that program. A small elementary pilot program began with limited funding. Dreams became an immediate reality when we were awarded two separate grants from the federal government—one Federal Safe and Drug Free Schools Elementary School Counseling Demonstration Grant, and one grant from the Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative. These grants provided the funding to transform the elementary comprehensive guidance program from a long-range plan to a reality in each of our 51 elementary schools.

The comprehensive guidance model provided the immediate structure to establish the program in every school. Administrators received comprehensive guidance training. A few had to be converted to a model that allocated considerable time for class curriculum. They thought a counseling program should be limited to individual and small-group counseling for identified students. Soon after the program began, principals and teachers observed positive behavior changes as students began applying the skills the counselors were teaching. They acknowledged the value of everyone receiving the curriculum. Skills were reinforced throughout the school. Siblings, friends, and school personnel reminded one another to apply the skills the counselor had taught. Data collected in each school gave evidence that violations of school rules and negative behavior were decreasing. Other districts using the curriculum also reported positive behavior changes.

Students relate quickly to the guidance curriculum because lesson objectives are reinforced with children's literature. Davis District elementary counselors used research, risk, and resiliency factors as they wrote the curriculum. For the past two years all elementary principals and teachers have responded to a survey about comprehensive guidance. Every school responded overwhelmingly that curriculum is the most important part of comprehensive guidance. Counselors submit monthly reports used for program management and accountability purposes. Curriculum reports summarize which lessons were taught, which grades received the lessons, and how many classes were taught within each grade. Responsive services reports detail the number of small groups held, the number of students attending, and the number of individual students counseled. Students in individual and small group-counseling must have

permission forms signed by their parents before they can attend. We also keep records for the students that need to see a counselor for an immediate need. If it is determined that they need additional counseling, they must have a permission form signed by their parents.

Elementary counselors have numerous opportunities for staff development. They meet monthly with all counselors in the district and once a month with just elementary counselors. They are also assigned to a small group of counselors with an experienced counselor as a mentor. Quarterly they meet with junior high and senior high counselors within their feeder patterns.

All of our counselors know the challenge of meeting immediate student needs and honoring their established scheduled calendar. The phrase "rigidly flexible" can serve as a guide to identify the true priority of a quality program. "Rigid" means a commitment to guidance curriculum, individual planning, responsive services, and system support. "Flexible" means recognizing the legitimate immediate needs of a student and responding with a caring, helpful experience.

Staff cooperation and creativity must be present for the rigidly flexible philosophy to work. Professional judgment will help draw the fine line between the student and the schedule. The final decision will come when the question is asked, "What is best for the student?" A cooperative philosophy can quickly adapt the planned rigid schedule into a flexible student-counselor experience.

Part of the Model for Public Education became our structure for responsive services. The acronym COMPASS represents individual student needs and goals. Each letter in the word has been used to provide counselors with a structure as they guide students in solving their immediate needs:

Calm Yourself
Objective (What do I want to accomplish?)
My Support System (Who can help me in a positive way?)
Plan (What am I going to do?)
Act (Carry out the plan.)
Summarize (What worked well, what didn't work.)
Successful Future Plan (What will I do next time?)

This model provides counselors with a format to guide students in an unscheduled but necessary time. Each concept can also be used in more detail and depth for small groups or classroom presentations. Our counselors adapt this model developmentally to guide students in grades K to 12. Students should benefit as they move through each grade using this model to help make decisions.

No duty is more urgent than that of returning thanks.
—*St. Ambrose*

Keys to Success

Let us never fail to recognize the heart and soul of program success. The program was developed for *students*. The program includes *parents* and *counselors*. The program involves the *school board, administrators, teachers, directors, information technology,* and *community.* A huge support system is also a major part of this success. The heart and soul of comprehensive guidance is dedicated, caring, and visionary people working together. The student who creates an individual plan, the secretary who schedules and reschedules, the parent who has an avenue to connect with his or her child, the school board and administrators who understand and support comprehensive guidance, the counselor who is amazed at the amount of work that can be accomplished in a year, and numerous others who contribute to the success of comprehensive guidance are all part of this important program.

I chose to address this topic because of my desire to recognize and honor many remarkable people. They have extended countless hours of work and immeasurable caring to our process and product. I continually observe their efforts to provide the best possible educational experience for Davis School District students. If space had permitted, I would have listed acknowledgments. These individuals are the true authors of this chapter. I extend my sincere appreciation to all of our caring team. Davis School District continues to promote the idea that "working together works."

> Never believe that a few caring people can't change the world. For, indeed, that's all who ever have.
>
> —*Margaret Mead*

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About the Author

Diann Davis is director of comprehensive guidance K–12 in Davis School District in Farmington, Utah. Prior to taking this administrative position, she was a high school counselor and an elementary school teacher. She also is an adjunct instructor at the university level. She is affiliated professionally with both state and national school counselor associations, and with teacher and administrator associations. She is a recipient of the Planning for Life Award. She can be reached at ddavis@curric.dist.davis.k12.ut.us.

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Part 9

Critical Issues in Enhancing the Cross-Cultural Effectiveness of Professional Educators

Applying Multiculturalism: *The Resolution of a Problem(atic) Situation*

Don C. Locke
Asheville Graduate Center
North Carolina State University
Asheville, North Carolina

Opening the Dialogue: *A Model for Districtwide Cross-Cultural Effectiveness Training*

Elias Zambrano
Northside Independent School District
San Antonio, Texas

Enhancing the Cross-Cultural Effectiveness of Professional Educators

School communities are increasingly pluralistic, bringing diverse individuals together from a diversity of cultures. By definition, diversity highlights the differences among and between people. Recognition of individual differences provides not only opportunities to appreciate and blend differences, but also opportunities to foster prejudice and discrimination. Effective efforts at attending to diversity issues entail not only recognizing and appreciating individual differences, but also helping individuals and groups respect each other. Individuals must learn and be taught how to relate effectively based on this appreciation and respect.

All educators need cultural competence in order to fulfill the schools' mission of helping prepare young people to be full participants in our society. Cultural competence means that professional educators appreciate the facets of their own cultures, respect those of others, and are able to relate effectively based on appreciation of cultural similarities and differences.

Comprehensive guidance programs serve all students through developmental guidance activities. Responsive services are equally accessible to all students, their teachers, and their parents. Guidance programs contribute to the climate of a school and school system. By being competent in working effectively across cultures, school counselors and other program staff members ensure that their program is helpful and valid to all individuals who participate in it. Additionally, they model such effectiveness for students and school-related adults. By consciously attending to these essential social issues, they enhance their programs and their schools.

School counselors and other guidance program staff members who are not culturally competent risk not treating all students, parents, and teachers fairly. Equity of access to program services is left to chance. Moreover, they do not model a set of social skills that is essential to success in the modern world.

Chapter Nineteen

Applying Multiculturalism
The Resolution of a Problem(atic) Situation

Don C. Locke
Asheville Graduate Center,
North Carolina State University, Asheville, North Carolina

We live in an age of diversity and multiculturalism. This means that we live among people of many cultures, which necessitates that we respond differently to the many different cultural groups. New projections are that the U.S. population will continue to change such that ethnic diversity will be the norm. By the year 2030, projections are that 14.4% of the population will be African American, 18.9% Hispanic, 7% Asian/Pacific Islander, and 1% Native American (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1996) and that 45% of students in public schools will be from non–Anglo-European backgrounds (Sue, Parham, & Bonilla-Santiago, 1998). These projections challenge schools to include in their mission the preparation of all students for significant changes in the schools and in society. The role of educators has been expanded to include the consideration of the cultural identity of students. In this expanded role, educators have a responsibility to increase their awareness, knowledge, and skills so that all students are taught to recognize the influences of culture on their lives, the influences of cultural group membership on their present and future behaviors, and the effect of diversity on life in general. In doing so, educators must recognize the role of culture in their interactions with each other and with their students.

Addressing Needs

The role of the school in the development of good citizenship has been firmly established. Damon (1988) argued that society (i.e., schools) should focus on the moral virtues of honesty, kindness, and concern for others; a sense of responsibility; and a sense of fairness. These moral

issues are essential to the full education of all students if they are to be prepared for their place in a diverse world. Consider the implications of the following facts. In one hour, about 500 new U.S. Americans will join us. Nearly 440 will be born here; 60 will immigrate. The names will be rich and strange, echoes from the far corners of the globe. The color of their skin will vary. Some will be wealthy, some comfortable, too many will be poor. All of them will be, or will aspire to be, U.S. Americans.

In the same one-hour period, more than 320 young people in the United States will make personal decisions that will affect them for the rest of their lives. Their families, their communities, and the entire nation will also live with the consequences. Nearly 100 will drop out of school; 170 will commit a violent crime against another human being; and 54 teenage girls will give birth, 32 of them out of wedlock.

And each succeeding hour, another 320 young people will repeat the same mistakes. By the end of the year, one million students will have dropped out of school, 1.3 million young people will have committed a violent crime, and 478,000 teenagers will have given birth. Each of these young people is also a U.S. American, and a disproportionate number of them are members of culturally diverse, non–Anglo-European ethnic groups. Most of them are *not* immigrants.

Multiculturalism Defined

Multiculturalism is an interdisciplinary process rather than a single program or a series of activities. Included in this process are the concepts embraced by cultural pluralism, ethnic and intercultural studies, and intergroup and human relations. The basic aim of multiculturalism is to help individuals to accept themselves and others as having dignity and worth. To achieve this aim, multiculturalism emphasizes similarities and differences among individuals and groups. Similarities are viewed as those characteristics that make people human, and differences are viewed as those characteristics that make each person or group unique and special. In this context, differences are viewed as positive. Thus, individuals are helped to respect and accept a wide range of diversity, including physical differences, emotional differences, cultural differences, and differences in lifestyles among individuals and groups. Educational systems must engage in a careful and systematic examination of the values being taught and how these values affect both those who are culturally different and members of the dominant culture.

First, there must be a strong commitment from the leadership of an educational system to the education of *all* students, with particular attention given to the needs of culturally non-dominant students. The school board and the superintendent set the tone and establish the agenda for what goes on in the system. They must see themselves as initiators of change and become more directly involved in the process through such efforts as increased on-site visitation or participation in classroom activities.

Second, educators must understand that they are responsible for teaching the values of the culture. Staff at all levels of the educational system must be willing to openly investigate their practices in terms of which values are being promoted by which practices. Evaluation should include input from all cultural groups. For example, Brookover (1985) characterized the value issue thusly:

> Under the guise of individual differences, meeting individual needs, continuous progress, humanistic education, and now kindergarten redshirting, we have sought to justify shortchanging the children of poor and minorities in American schools. The belief in vast differences in "intelligence" or ability to learn, which are highly associated with race and socioeconomic status of the family, provide the pervasive "justification" for discriminatory educational programs within our schools (p. 261).

Third, the system must ensure that those individuals willing to implement changes are supported in their efforts. No individual should feel reluctant to make changes because he or she is unsure of what the administration thinks or feels about implementing multicultural strategies. For example, school personnel must be able to advocate for children without feeling threatened for doing so.

Fourth, all members of the institution must communicate that they value diversity. They must first decide what diversity means in the context of their community and then evaluate practices and procedures in terms of their relationship to diversity. All school administrators must communicate that they believe that there is more than one right way to think, feel, believe, and act. They must communicate in open forums that differences in these areas do not mean second-class status, a decrease in excellence, or a threat to the dominant culture.

Finally, educators need to engage in a systemwide strategic planning and evaluation process related to the education of children from non-dominant

cultures. Issues to consider as part of this planning process are the numbers of school personnel who are culturally different, plans for improving the multicultural competence of all staff, goals for educational achievement for culturally non-dominant students, and how policies will be implemented relative to these students. Such a planning process would include an ongoing evaluation of program effectiveness in meeting the goals established in the planning process.

What Individual Schools Must Do

How is this accomplished at the school level? The staffing composition and patterns throughout the school should reflect the pluralistic nature of the U.S. American society. Once the staff is in place, efforts must be made to ensure that they are culturally sensitive. This culturally sensitive staff must adopt and use appropriate, flexible, and unbiased curricula that incorporate the contributions of all groups. Instructional materials must be free of bias, omissions, and stereotypes. Instructional materials must be inclusive rather than supplementary. Finally, educational evaluation procedures must be sensitive to different learning styles. Lee (2001) stated that cultural diversity must be addressed in the provision of comprehensive school guidance and counseling programs. In the role of consultant, school counselors must be prepared to address a variety of issues, concerns, or problems that might arise in their school.

An Example

In spite of the best efforts and intentions, problems will arise that will challenge the best school, with the best staff, implementing the best possible multicultural objectives. When problems arise, individuals tend to resort to the thoughts and ideas that reflect their pasts and that shelter them from revealing thoughts or behaviors that might be challenged in the multicultural arena. One example illustrates this process.

The Situation

The elementary school in question was located in a medium-sized city in the southeastern United States, and more than half the students came from culturally non-dominant backgrounds. The school found itself challenged by an incident that seemed to stall the movement toward increased emphasis on diversity and multiculturalism. The incident began when a White teacher described an African American student using a term that some White and African American staff considered racist. Identification of the epithet used by the White teacher is not important

because the purpose of this example is to illustrate a process, rather than to decide whether a particular term is racist. That many considered the term racist and that the event precipitated an atmosphere in the school which stalled its multicultural efforts are the important factors.

By the time I was invited to the school as a multicultural consultant, relationships had deteriorated and had become polarized. Two rather extreme positions existed: (a) that the event was typical of the beliefs, attitudes, and opinions of many others in the school who covertly engaged in other racist behaviors, and (b) that the teacher's statement was an individual behavior, occurring accidentally and probably not even reflecting her true beliefs. Interestingly, the teacher had resigned her position as a result of the tension in the school.

Successes

I scheduled small-group meetings with all school personnel to discuss the situation around topics of communication, respect, and conflict resolution. The small groups consisted of 8 to 12 participants who were randomly assigned to each group. The following questions were used to stimulate the conversation:

- What is your general communication style?
- How do you express emotions?
- What is the role of body language in communication?
- How do you use personal space?
- How do you gain someone's respect?
- How can you show someone respect?
- How do you determine when you are in conflict?
- How do you deal with conflict?
- How does "saving face" affect your dealing with conflict?
- How does culture affect your communication style, your view of respect, and your attitudes about conflict?

In each group the participants expressed satisfaction with their experience and an appreciation that the time devoted to discussion of the issues around conflict resolution was well spent.

The small-group sessions were a prelude to a two-hour schoolwide meeting on multicultural team building. Several central office personnel also joined the faculty for this meeting. It was clear at the beginning of this meeting that the atmosphere was informal and relaxed, and a general spirit of collegiality existed. Some general rules were established for the meeting, and I briefly discussed the elements necessary for our meeting and for building trust: honesty (truth

with integrity and without exaggerations or lies), openness (willingness to listen fully and share all ideas and feelings), consistency (predictable responses and stable principles), and respect (treating all people with dignity, equality, and fairness). I observed the following: participants listening to each other, most individuals participating, a comfort with disagreement, a willingness to confront others' ideas, and a commitment to leave some things in the past and move toward different relationships in the future. There was a commitment to deal with race and race issues forthrightly without personal attacks.

What I Learned

This experience confirmed my belief that race remains a source of potential conflict in multicultural environments. Even so, participants demonstrated a willingness to work through issues in an environment of trust and respect. Even when issues are allowed to smolder, there is a possibility for resolution leading to a refocusing on students and education as the purpose of the institution. Participants can come to appreciate and value cultural differences, attitudes, and behaviors.

Principles of Multicultural Practice for Addressing Similar Situations

A number of principles serve as a guiding philosophy for increasing multicultural understanding (Locke, 1998). They are:

1. The golden rule, "Do unto others as you wish them to do unto you," is the core of good human relations.
2. Learn as much as possible about your own culture. People can appreciate another culture much more if they first appreciate their own culture.
3. Work at being open and honest in your relationships with members of various cultures. Be open to different attitudes and values, and encourage those different from you to be open and honest with you about issues related to their culture. Attend to the verbal and nonverbal communication patterns between yourself and your culturally different students or clients.
4. Seek genuine respect and appreciation for culturally different attitudes and behaviors. Demonstrate that you both recognize and value the cultures of those different from yourself. One way to demonstrate respect is to start from the student's or client's life experiences, not from your own.
5. Seek to gain insight into key cultural similarities and differences between your individual style and those of colleagues in your school.

Learn to accurately "read" your colleagues' behavior and understand the "why" behind their actions.

6. Keep in mind that individuals are both members of their cultural group and unique individuals as well. Strive to keep a healthy balance between your view of students as cultural beings and as unique beings.
7. Learn to examine your cultural biases, prejudices, and stereotypes. Eliminate any behaviors that suggest prejudice or racism and do not tolerate such behaviors from your colleagues or from other members of your own cultural group. Teach your students how to recognize bias and how to challenge stereotypes.
8. Encourage administrators and supervisors in your school or agency to institutionalize practices that acknowledge the diversity among your students.
9. Hold high expectations of your culturally non-dominant students or clients and encourage others who work with diverse populations to do likewise.
10. Ask questions about the culture of ethnically different groups. Learn as much as possible about different cultures and share what you learn with others. Be honest in your interactions. Recognize that you will make mistakes and learn from those mistakes.
11. Develop culturally specific strategies, techniques, and programs to foster the psychological development of culturally non-dominant individuals and groups.

Cultural competence begins with core fundamental beliefs of warmth, empathy, and genuineness, and continues with appreciation and respect for cultural differences, both of which result in culturally congruent behaviors. Cultural competence is a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency, or among professionals and enable the system, agency, or professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations. Educators who practice culturally competent behaviors have gone beyond just learning behaviors; they demonstrate inherent caring, appreciation, affirmation, and respect for others in their environment. Culturally competent behaviors lead to more effective teaching and learning.

Developing culturally appropriate programs is an evolving process. In schools, as in all other institutions, this process requires commitment, time, interest in changing the organization, and a willingness to evaluate one's personal role in the organization. The same techniques used to help members cope with other challenges in schools—sharing stories, offering constructive advice, and mentoring—have been found to promote healthy, culturally competent behaviors. School personnel must view cultural competence as a constant learning process, requiring diligence, perseverance, and commitment to remain with the process.

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About the Author

Don C. Locke has been for eight years director of the Asheville Graduate Center and director of the North Carolina State University doctoral program in Adult and Community College Education at that center. Prior to that he was professor and head of the Department of Counselor Education at North Carolina State University in Raleigh. He has also been a high school counselor and social studies teacher. Don has held many major leadership positions within the American Counseling Association, including serving on the ACA Governing Council, and being chairman of the Counseling and Human Development Foundation. Most recently he has been president of the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision and president of Chi Sigma Iota International. He is the author or coauthor of more than 60 publications with a current focus on multicultural issues. He can be reached at dlocke@unca.edu.

Chapter Twenty

Opening the Dialogue: *A Model for Districtwide Cross-Cultural Effectiveness Training*

Elias Zambrano
Northside Independent School District, San Antonio, Texas

In the spring of 1998, a parent in the Northside Independent School District (Northside ISD) filed a complaint with the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) alleging that a racially hostile environment existed within the district. The allegation was based on a particular student-student interaction at one of the district's six comprehensive high schools. The complaint alleged that the district failed to provide a climate that minimized such problems and failed to address the problem once it occurred. Though the district did not agree with various aspects of the complaint, it did voluntarily agree to address the allegations. One of the voluntary actions was to "provide mandatory in-service on cultural sensitivity for administrators and teachers by September 30, 1998, and teachers will reinforce concepts related to cultural diversity, as appropriate, throughout the 1998–99 school year" (Henderson & Zambrano, 1998). This event set the stage for the planning of a districtwide training session.

Concern regarding racial and ethnic insensitivity had been expressed prior this precipitating event. During the previous school year (1997–98), Dr. Patricia Henderson, director of guidance for Northside ISD, reported hearing concerns among members of the counseling staff about racial and ethnic insensitivity on the various campuses. As a result, a training model for the district's campus counselors had been developed during that school year, and all elementary, middle, and high school counselors had participated in a daylong training regarding cultural issues. The training session developed for the district counseling staff provided the framework for a trainer of trainers model to be used for training the district's 1,900 professional employees.

The mission statement of the Northside ISD Strategic Plan for 1998–2003 espouses an appreciation for cultural diversity and the importance of building "challenging learning environments . . . in a climate of cooperation and mutual respect" (Northside ISD, 1998). Furthermore, the following are drawn from the statement of beliefs in the district strategic plan:

- The well-being and education of children are vital to the future of our society.
- The quality of our schools directly affects the quality of our community
- Each individual has worth and deserves respect.
- The diversity of our cultural heritage enriches life.

The district strategic plan was laced with these and other statements that clearly signaled the importance the district placed on cultural diversity. The strategic plan was developed by a mixed group of individuals representing the school, the home, local businesses, and the community at large. Whereas OCR provided the legal mandate for the training, the strategic plan clearly provided the philosophical authority to prepare a districtwide training model.

Developing the Model

> District Superintendent Ed Rawlinson asked Patricia Henderson, director of guidance, and Elias Zambrano, coordinator for the district Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Program, to lead in the development of a model that would address the commitment to cultural sensitivity training by the deadline specified in the agreement with OCR. To address this task, we turned our attention to the model that had been used with the school counselors in the previous year. The reception of the training had been positive among the district counseling staff. The training had addressed cultural sensitivity, as was required in the agreement with OCR, and it further provided district counselors with an opportunity to develop plans for enhancing their own cultural competencies and for addressing culturally sensitive school climates.

The training to be developed would be addressed to teachers, campus- and district-level administrators, counselors, psychologists, and other support personnel. Therefore, in beginning the development of the model, we referred to *Cultural Diversity: An Inservice Awareness Program for Educators,* a training model developed by the American School Counselors Association (ASCA) that had served as the framework for the training provided to the district counselors (Jung, Price, Schanberg, Sheldon, Wilson, & Zambrano, 1987). The ASCA training model was developed by a team of six school counselors representing different geographic areas of the United States, and the elementary, middle, and high school levels. It was designed for presentation by school counselors to

mixed groups of teachers, administrators, and others who worked on the school campus. It therefore provided a reference point in the development of the needed model for the school district.

In reviewing the ASCA model, we believed some of the ideas and activities were germane to our district training needs. However, we needed a new plan that more fully addressed strategies for building school- and district-level climates that were culturally sensitive and friendly. The plan also needed to provide Northside ISD staff with knowledge and skills for cross-cultural effectiveness. We entitled the session "Becoming Culturally Competent Educators: Works-in-Progress" (Henderson & Zambrano, 1998), because we believed that this daylong training was to be the genesis for the continued growth and attention needed to create conditions that would support culturally friendly and sensitive climates across the district. Goals and objectives were crafted to meet the provisions of the agreement with OCR and to provide Northside ISD staff with quality training in cross-cultural effectiveness. The following goals were developed to increase cultural competence:

- to be aware of one's own cultural-based assumptions, values, and biases;
- to understand the worldview of students who are culturally different from oneself; and
- to use effective instructional practices, intervention strategies, and techniques (Sue, Arredondo, & McDavis, 1992).

The objectives developed to realize these goals will be described later in the text.

As previously stated, the model we developed was intended to train 1,900 professional staff members. We readily determined that if the training were to be completed by the appointed date, a trainer of trainers model would have to be used. The district lacked the physical plant to house 1,900 people in any one location at any one time, and it would be difficult to find enough days to release campus personnel from their duties to provide the training to all those expected to attend. Besides, it was our intent that the model would afford participants an opportunity to learn in environments that encouraged participation and risk taking.

We also agreed that the training model had to be both experiential and didactic in presentation, because including both styles of presentation would respect the various styles of learning present in any large-group setting (Morris and McCarthy, 1995). We intended to provide participants with information that could challenge them to stretch intellectually with regard to cross-cultural effectiveness and also give them time to practice the information presented.

Finally, we agreed that the design had to provide participants with the perception of a high degree of safety, as it was clear that there would be resistance given that the training was mandatory for all campus and district personnel. In

order to address this and the other parameters we identified, we agreed that each campus would identify a training team of at least two people to be sent to a training session. We recommended that an administrator be a member of the training team to give the project the campus support it needed. We also recommended that a counselor be a member of the training team to lend the support of expertise in human relationships. The 82 campus teams, one team from every campus, would receive the training. Then, in collaboration with the campus administration, they would be charged with training their respective campus colleagues.

Activities and Objectives

As mentioned previously, objectives were identified to meet the goals established for this training session. We then selected or created activities to address each objective in learning environments that were sensitive to various learning styles, enjoyable, perceived to be safe, and provided opportunities for participants to stretch their professional competencies regarding cross-cultural effectiveness. Each objective was addressed by two activities: The first introducing the concept being addressed, and the second providing a deeper understanding or experience. Following is a description, by objective, of the training model that was developed and that was eventually presented to the 1,900 professional staff members of Northside ISD.

Objective 1: Examining Beliefs and Feelings about Different Cultures

Activity 1: Organized in small groups, participants were provided a structured opportunity for a cursory examination of their personal values about others and the impact they wish to make on others.

Activity 2: Participants were asked to reveal more about their beliefs regarding race by individually completing a cultural awareness inventory. This instrument provided a means for safely discussing similar and differing ideas about race and ethnicity among members of a small group.

Objective II: Developing Awareness of How Personal History Affects Cultural Attitudes

Activity 3: Continuing in small groups, participants were asked to use their names as a means of exploring their family's racial or ethnic heritage and family or community experiences tied to their name. Participants began to associate more closely and express personal experiences and issues of race and ethnicity in this activity.

Activity 4: Participants moved away from their small (and relatively safe) group

in this activity and formed a new group with others who shared a common racial or ethnic identity. Groups were asked to discuss the beliefs they held about other racial or ethnic groups, and the beliefs they perceived other groups held about them, including racial slurs, stereotypes, etc. Groups were encouraged to share their findings with the larger groups to identify similarities and differences in experiences among the various racial and ethnic groups represented.

Objective III: Applying Theory to Practice in Defining Culturally Competent Educators

Activity 5: Again in small groups, participants were asked to use art media to brainstorm characteristics that identify a culturally competent educator. Time for sharing among the various small groups was provided.

Activity 6: Through the use of a handout, participants discussed professional competencies and standards that would describe a culturally competent educator.

Objective IV: Generating Specific Plans for Fostering Climates of Mutual Respect in Our Schools

Activity 7: Remaining in small groups, participants were led through a structured exercise that challenged them to identify and discuss the nature of cultural insensitivity found in their school or district environment. Time was again provided for small groups to share their findings with the larger group.

Activity 8: Remaining in their small groups, participants were asked to identify one culturally related problem in their work environment that was challenging yet within their locus of control. Each group was asked to brainstorm possible solutions for resolving that area of cultural concern.

Objective V: Leaving Better Prepared to Act from a Culturally Sensitive Base

Activity 9: Continuing in their small groups, participants were asked to use the power of visualization to synthesize all that they had learned, experienced, and discovered in the course of the day. They were asked to create a logo that represented the culturally friendly climate they would commit to building upon returning to their school or district office. Time for sharing among the groups was again provided as closure for this activity.

Activity 10: Participants were asked to reconsider the first activity and the values they had espoused regarding others. Given the day's activities, they were provided time to add to their ideas and initial thoughts. A call to make one commitment either to improve themselves or to make their environment more culturally sensitive ended the day's experience.

Schools chose various times to present the training. Some schools chose to divide the presentation of the training by objectives, holding two three-hour sessions after the school day. Others held the training on a Saturday and provided the staff with compensatory time later in the school year. As the training sessions were held across the district, we began to receive feedback, and we learned the following positive features of the training model:

- Concern for the level of racial and ethnic insensitivity was found on all campuses, regardless of demographics.
- Using the small-group structure for most of the experiential activities provided a safe environment for participants to share their experiences and learn from each other.
- The sharing of experiences and concerns in the group sessions provided a safe invitation for those most resistant to participate.
- People, regardless of their racial or ethnic heritage, were eager to tell their stories.
- School training teams appreciated having a model to present that was easy to duplicate, activity oriented, and prepared so that all materials were ready for duplication.
- Support from the superintendent down the chain of command added to the success of the training.

Limitations of the Training Model

Given the feedback we received, the model apparently was largely effective in training Northside professional staff in cross-cultural competencies. However, there were problems encountered along the way. During the initial planning of the training model, *key* district personnel expressed uneasiness over the experiential nature of the training being recommended and the time that was being requested. They seemed concerned that opening dialogue across the district about racial and ethnic issues would result in opening a Pandora's box that district and campus leaders might not be able to contain or have the resources to respond to. Dialogue about the need to learn and experience (as opposed to having a lecture session), and about the sense of safety built into the plan was necessary to gain approval for the plan as presented.

Another limitation of the training model is that it was not part of a larger plan to continue training and support activities over time. Because it was a stand-alone activity, most campuses did not provide additional time for more training or follow-up after the session was completed. Additionally, no one person or department was charged with monitoring campus and district activities after the period for campus training was completed. As a result, all new staff

members who have been employed by the school district since the summer of 1998 have not had similar training and, sad to say, racial and ethnic incidents have continued to happen that have had a profound effect on the life of various campuses and the district itself.

From these limitations it is clear there is continued uneasiness about discussing the multicultural nature of society in the United States. Without the legal pressure that precipitated the development of this session, much dialogue that took place in 82 campuses across the district never would have happened. Participants would have lost the spectrum of experiences, the beauty found in the plethora of traditions grounded in cultural heritage, and the celebration of endurance and resilience that was demonstrated over and again as individuals shared their stories.

We also learned that creating school and district environments that are culturally sensitive and friendly requires a commitment of people, time, and resources over an extended period. Changing any environment requires time to think about the changes needed, to articulate what is needed and why, and to practice the set of behaviors that will support the desired change.

Involvement of People in a People Problem

"Becoming Culturally Competent Educators: Works-in-Progress" was presented to 1,900 professional employees of the Northside ISD, and the one primary factor in its success was the commitment of the trainers to take the training back to their campuses. The decision to take training out of the hands of recognized experts in the field of human relations and instead to arm campus members with the skills and materials necessary to lead the training provided a high level of participation and trust among campus staff members. Schools selected who would lead their training session by sending teams to the trainer of trainers sessions. Very often, the training teams consisted of administrators and counselors. Each team representing a campus had a better understanding of the cultural issues present on their campus than any outside trainer could have had. In most cases, trust was already in place, or at least was easier to build, between these individuals and campus staff. Furthermore, we suggested that the training teams engage more individuals on their campuses to assist with the training, thereby increasing the number of people who had ownership in the session. Individuals were enlisted to assist with materials preparation, to arrange food and facilities, and to facilitate small-group activities and discussion. Enlarging the circle of campus staff participants also extended the network of people committed to a successful training session.

The incident that was the impetus for the development of "Becoming Culturally Competent Educators: Works-in-Progress" is not unique to Northside ISD. Incidents of cultural insensitivity are found in all schools in all communities. In closing, I offer the following recommendations for those who have similar needs and concerns to provide training in cultural effectiveness.

1. Get support from those in the organizational hierarchy who have similar needs or concerns. Though doing so is not essential for success, it provides a level of legitimacy that facilitates the delivery of such training and increases the level of participation.
2. Begin small if you are meeting resistance. It is more important to begin than to begin with a big bang. Begin with a class, a team of teachers, a team of support staff, or a parent group. A successful experience with any one group will only increase the impetus for more work in the area of cultural effectiveness.
3. Develop a plan for ongoing training and activities over time. People and institutions change their beliefs and values slowly. Have a plan for how each training session will support the previous one, and for the kind of strategies that will sustain the synergy and change created. Also designate who will be accountable for ensuring that activities are completed.
4. In planning your training, work on the climate first. The greater participants' sense of safety and enjoyment, the more risks they will take with you—and each other!
5. Move slowly in inviting participants to work on issues of racial and ethnic insensitivity. Like everything else, their level of comfort with issues of race is developmental and reflects where they are with their own racial identity (Helms, 1995).
6. Move from activity to higher order concepts. Activities allow participants to safely experience the very issues you may wish them to discuss. The experience gives them a framework for discussing topics that may otherwise create defensiveness or may seem too frightening given each individual's background.
7. Have participants develop a plan. Doing so gives them something concrete to leave with and a point from which to begin their work in their own setting. If there is a system for mutual support, encouragement, and accountability, the plan is more likely to work.

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About the Author

Elias Zambrano is director of guidance in Northside Independent School District, San Antonio, Texas. At the time of the work described in this publication, he was the coordinator of Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Programs in the same district. In the past he has been an elementary school counselor, a middle school teacher, a counselor, and a head counselor. He has been active in Texas Counseling Association chapters and divisions for nearly 20 years and is the 2000–01 president of the Texas Counseling Association. He has also co-authored a guide for elementary school counselors. He can be reached at elias_zambrano@nisd.net.

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Chapter Twenty-One

Conclusion:
Lessons from Experience

In this publication 20 guidance program and staff leaders have shared experiences they had as they implemented comprehensive guidance programs. In reading their various experiences, we are struck by the similarities and differences among them. In this conclusion we first discuss the variety of catalysts that caused changes to occur in the continuing implementation and improvement of the school or district comprehensive guidance program. Some of these catalysts came from outside, and others from inside, the guidance program and school counseling staff. Second, we identify themes that recur in the achievement of successful results. These successes were due to effective management of the change process. All required effective guidance program and staff leadership. Finally, we draw some implications from the leaders' empirical lessons.

Catalysts for Change

Some of the catalysts for change are external to the guidance program, counseling staff, or profession. They pop up due to some contextual event or situation. Others come from pressures exerted by implementation of the program itself, its staff, or the guidance and counseling profession. These are internal. They grow from within. Some catalysts result from the convergence of both internal and external forces.

External Catalysts

Recurrent external catalysts that raise critical issues for guidance program implementation result from increasing efforts to meet students' divergent needs. There is increased recognition of the quantity of different needs and the severity of some students' needs. Recognition of the effect of diversity is felt in ways ranging from school accountability to

achievement standards set for all students (e.g., statewide testing) to awareness of the impact of ethnic and racial tensions on peaceful school climates. Every school program is called upon to contribute optimally to student development by delivering the highest possible quality of services. The delivery of high quality services brings to the forefront national program standards.

Increased recognition of the important roles that parents fulfill in helping their students succeed in school has brought calls for greater parent involvement. Increased parent involvement has opened up the schoolhouse walls considerably, bringing new, diverse perspectives to be considered and incorporated in school operations.

In attending to the need for flexibility and responsiveness to student, parent, and community needs, many school boards and superintendents are engaging in strategic planning that involves representatives of the school communities. New superintendents are recasting the missions and models of education, often in terms that call for effective guidance and counseling for students and for efficient use of school funds. The latter requires using staff members in roles commensurate with their levels of education—i.e., counselors providing guidance and counseling rather than carrying out paraprofessional tasks, or tasks that belong to or could be shared with other professionals.

An increasing number of states have developed policy statements or standards for comprehensive guidance programs. District and campus administrators want the best for their students and to bring their school or district practices into compliance with laws and policies. They, in turn, seek the changes needed.

In seeking ways to expand and improve services to students, two new sets of resources are being made available to school counselors and to guidance programs. When used in the context of a comprehensive guidance program, computer and other electronic technology enhance school counselors' work. The opening of the schoolhouse to a wider range of volunteers and community-based professionals has expanded awareness of the human resources available to guidance programs.

Internal Catalysts

The expansion of policy and administrative support and the increasing demands to provide effective guidance and counseling systematically to all students and to address more student and societal issues have brought about the recognition of the need for district-level guidance directors and supervisors. Central guidance administrators have guidance expertise and administrative responsibilities to better coordinate counselors' work, to target improvements, to design accountability systems, and much more.

Their positions result from external catalysts, and they often become internal catalysts for change and improvement.

Guidance administrators and professional school counselors seek to implement the best professional practices. Ensuring this requires meaningful evaluation of guidance programs and of staff performance. A shortage of newly trained school counselors has caused some self-examination by the profession, resulting in a recognition that the traditional school counseling role appeals neither to counselors in training nor to teachers seeking a different professional direction.

Counselors' jobs are complex. There are more needs and demands on their time than there is time available. Guidance program and staff leaders are needed to help them stay focused on the priorities agreed upon by the various constituencies they serve. Guidance administrators define systems and means to hold counselors accountable and to provide training in the skills they need to enhance their job performance.

Successful Results

Critical issues can lead to meaningful, positive change when guidance program and staff leaders are capable of and willing to work through the change process, and are capable of and willing to fulfill their leadership responsibilities. In the experiences described in this publication, we see recurrent examples of key elements in the change process that contribute to turning a critical issue into an opportunity for program enhancement. There are also some recurrent themes in how these leaders carried out their leadership responsibilities.

Change Process

Whether as a result of administrative scholarship or of good intuitive sense, effective responses to critical issues occur when leaders are cognizant that systemic change is called for. In these examples, many of the guidance departments themselves had already experienced such changes when they initially established their comprehensive guidance programs. They understand that time and hard work are required, and so are patience and persistence. A focus on continuous improvement in themselves, their program, the school counselors, and the students provides the context for meaningful change.

Positive change requires having a vision for the program and for the jobs of school counselors. Students' interests come first in these visions, but another consideration is firm commitment to the program mission and to counselors fulfilling professionally appropriate roles. We also see an awareness that the

school-based comprehensive guidance program is implemented in the broad context of the total school and school district. The programs described here do not operate in isolation from the rest of the school community. There is rapport and understanding for and by others outside the guidance department, making it feasible to identify activities that are the sole responsibility of the guidance program, what belongs to others, and what should be shared. Additionally there is a willingness to let others into the program through helping to design it (e.g., stakeholders, committees of affected people) and deliver it (e.g., parents, community members, related professionals). There are recurrent examples of listening to others' needs or wants—including those of program critics—of being open and nondefensive, and of reaching out to others. There is a readiness to link the program with broader policy statements and to seize opportunities such as those provided by modern technology.

In working through the various issues, we see recurrent examples of counselors setting specific change targets and finding ways to attain them. We see the use of hard data to provide the rationale for and basis of recommended changes. There is a willingness and capacity to be accountable for the results. There is a recognition of the need for guidance leaders and school counselors to work through a problem to its successful resolution.

Leadership Responsibilities

When they are faced with new opportunities for program improvement or challenges to the integrity of the program, the guidance program and staff leaders represented in this publication carry out their responsibilities using a repertoire of leadership strategies and drawing on each of their four roles (administration, supervision, management, and professional leadership). In their administrative roles, they are responsible for applying their legitimate administrative authority. They recognize their responsibilities to both their administrative employers and to the school counselors they lead. They recognize that administrative and policy support is essential to program success, and they work to garner and maintain it. Thus, they work with superintendents and principals, with state education department staff, and with district administrators of relevant departments. They seek policy support from their local school boards, state legislators, and regulators.

They set in place systems for program and performance accountability and evaluation. They are cognizant of and accountable to their own job descriptions, including the power bases they have. They accept their delegated authority, promote professional and program standards, know the support they have, and build their own networks and support systems with other leaders. They keep abreast of the advances in the profession and, at the same time, stay

grounded in the reality of the environment where they work. They are aware of and honest about improvements needed in their guidance programs and counselors' performance. They help staff members be accountable by establishing systems for time management, for reporting work efforts, and so on.

In their supervision roles, based on their guidance and counseling expertise, they are sensitive to counselors' needs. They understand and work on counselors' resistance to change. They work *with* staff members to ensure their involvement. They make provisions for the staff development often needed by counselors (in topics from technology to cross-cultural effectiveness), and devise new strategies for helping counselors grow (e.g., from action research to in-community training).

In their management roles, they acquire and ensure efficient use of human, financial, and political resources. Examples described in this publication range from funding to people—secretaries, paraprofessionals, teachers, administrators, other mental health professionals, and volunteers. They understand the "big picture" and link to larger contexts, such as state departments of education, student services teams, administrative teams, and instructional teams.

In their professional leadership roles, they keep abreast of professional standards. They are aware of their own needs, practice self-care, and pursue their own professional growth and development. They open channels of communication among counselors, and provide networking opportunities to enable them to broaden their perspectives and develop support systems. They nurture other counseling leaders. They collaborate with other counseling leaders locally and at the state and national levels. They collaborate with related professionals and with other in-district administrators.

There are common themes in the successful change responses chronicled by the 20 groups of practitioners and in the responsibilities carried out by guidance program and staff leaders, regardless of the (external or internal) catalysts that caused changes in comprehensive guidance program implementation, the issue, the phase of program development (planning, designing, implementing, evaluating, or enhancing), the comprehensive guidance program element (content, structural, or program components; counselor time and talent use; resources), the setting (state, demographics, size of student population), or the organizational placement of the leader (building counselor, central office guidance program or staff leader, association leader, state department staff, counselor educator).

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- Be sensitive and responsive to others' needs.
- Accept reality.
- Be open to and accepting of others.
- Build rapport with others.
- Communicate and collaborate with others.
- Maintain the integrity of your value/belief system.
- Accept responsibility for what is yours.
- Accept the consequences of your actions.
- Develop and make good use of support systems and the resources available to you.
- Recognize that we are all works in progress.
- Set improvement goals and plan how to achieve them.

Don't these words sound like basic counseling goals, the goals that counselors hold for their clients and for themselves? They also capture the essence of the implications drawn from the collective experience of the authors in this publication and of other professional school counselors who have successfully navigated the waters of implementing meaningful comprehensive guidance programs. We offer them as suggested rules to live by when facing some of the rough spots in striving for full implementation of your comprehensive guidance program.

Be sensitive and responsive to others' needs: Our society is ever-changing. The students in our schools and their parents reflect the pluralism of our free society. School counselors, indeed all school staff members, must maintain their sensitivity to the changes in our communities and, relatedly, continuously develop their competencies and their programs to best meet the needs of those they serve. This suggests a need for continuous improvement and change in what services comprehensive guidance programs provide and how they are designed to provide them, in what school counselors do, and in how they do it.

Accept reality: A school-based guidance program is part of a larger system: the school, the school district, the state, and the national education system. It is vital to the relevance of a school guidance program that it fulfill integral parts of the mission of the school in which it is located. This relevance is essential to securing the policy and administrative support needed for guidance programs to flourish.

Be open to and accepting of others: School counselors describe themselves

as "the hearts of the school." To be such hearts, they must be inclusive of all students in their program activities, and they must open their doors to all of the adults involved in students' personal, social, career, and educational development. To be optimally successful in the 21st century, school counselors can no longer be isolationists in delivering their programs and services. They must involve parents, teachers, administrators, community-based professionals, and volunteers in the design and implementation of the guidance program. They must apply their human relations skills to work with other adults.

Build rapport with others: Counselors in training learn the importance of and some skills for building rapport with their clients. Good rapport is based on mutual respect and on mutual understanding. School counselors must reach out to educate others about the value of their program, how it benefits students and the community, how it works, what its priorities are, what activities it involves, and who the clients are. They need to learn the same about other programs.

Communicate and collaborate with others: Good communication skills express openness and build rapport. The essence of counseling itself entails the counselor listening, responding, and expressing thoughts and feelings. So, too, does collaborative work with teachers, administrators, parents, and other counselors as we combine resources to facilitate healthy student development.

Maintain the integrity of your value/belief system: Comprehensive guidance programs are based on a sound rationale, awareness of their fundamental assumptions, and clarity of definition in their mission. These factors operationalize the vision of a guidance program. They define the standards for the program and the professionals' jobs within them. Commitment to the integrity of these standards is required.

Accept responsibility for what is yours: In a successfully implemented comprehensive guidance program, professional school counselors and their leaders know what the expectations for the program are and they strive to meet those standards. Experienced and effective school guidance and counseling professionals are appointed to lead and carry out guidance program implementation. Guidance program administrators are delegated the authority they need in order to lead change efforts that result in continuous improvement in the program and in the counselors' competence in delivering it. Counselors' and leaders' responsibilities are defined and they are trained to fulfill them.

Accept the consequences of your actions: With clear standards for program implementation and counselor performance, and with administrators who are

equipped to lead the program, systems can (and should) be put in place to ensure accountability for student results and for adherence to program priorities and professional standards.

Develop and make good use of support systems and the resources available to you: With a clear definition of what a guidance program offers and how it offers it, new resources can be effectively applied to support program implementation. For example, technology can be used to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the program, not interrupt it and interfere with its implementation design. When new, relevant policies are sought or set, they can be used to provide support for enhanced program delivery. When additional human resources—school counselors, teachers, volunteers, or related professionals—become available, their competencies can be integrated into the existing program to expand its capacity to help students.

Recognize that we are all works in progress: As life is a continuous process of development, so are the products of human beings. Schools, curricula, and teachers are continuously changing as they strive to better carry out their mission. Thus, effective school guidance programs, and the professional school counselors within them, also continuously seek program and competence enhancements. They strive to do their jobs better. They strive to improve and change their program activities in response to students' ever-changing needs. Changes are developed and carried out thoughtfully and systematically, based on hard data and information and on a clear vision for the program. The hard work and complexities of change are recognized and are managed to ensure successful implementation.

Set improvement goals and plan how to achieve them: Improvement goals target not only program additions, but also barriers to full comprehensive guidance program implementation. Continuous efforts are made to displace non-guidance activities done by school counselors. Counselors and guidance program staff leaders carefully and astutely identify such problems, and work cooperatively and collaboratively with others to implement appropriate solutions. Professional school counselors willingly share responsibilities and tasks with others. They are patient and persistent in pursuit of their goals.

Whatever your situation is, take heed that guidance program and staff leaders—regardless of their placements in the organization—fulfill pivotal roles in bringing about positive program changes and addressing critical issues. Having read their stories, you too must feel that they have vision and passion, are optimistic, and are somewhat fearless. They each conclude and recommend

that the benefits of facing hard issues outweigh the problems, efforts, and time involved. Each author indicates in his or her own way and with a tinge of pride, "It's been worth it!"

EXEMPLARY GATEWAY WEBSITES FOR COUNSELORS & THERAPISTS

CYBERCOUNSELING
http://cybercounsel.uncg.edu

A site for innovative online demonstrations and discussion of cybercounseling and cyberlearning

ERIC/CASS VIRTUAL LIBRARIES
http://ericcass.uncg.edu/virtuallib/newlibhome.html

Full-text resources on critical issues in Counseling: Cultural Diversity, School Violence, Student Achievement, Conflict Resolution, Bullying in Schools, Depression & Suicide, Substance Abuse, Youth Gangs and Juvenile Boot Camps

INTERNATIONAL CAREER DEVELOPMENT LIBRARY-ICDL
http://icdl.uncg.edu

An on-line collection of full-text Career Development resources
"Where to go when you want to know"

ERIC CASS

ERIC COUNSELING & STUDENT SERVICES CLEARINGHOUSE
http://ericcass.uncg.edu

The basic resource for Counselors- a Gateway to many other sites

Visit the newest Virtual Library
Helping People to Cope With Trauma, Grief and Stress
http://ericcass.uncg.edu/virtuallib/stressbook.html

Full-text resources for assistance after traumatic events such as school violence, terrorist attacks, or the death of a friend or family member

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ERIC Counseling & Student Services Clearinghouse
201 Ferguson Building • School of Education
University of North Carolina at Greensboro
Greensboro, North Carolina • 27402
800-414-9769
FAX: 336-334-4116
ericcass@uncg.edu

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